

THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG NEGATIVE SELF-
SCHEMAS, PARTNER ATTACHMENT
STYLES, AND RELATIONSHIP
ADJUSTMENT

By

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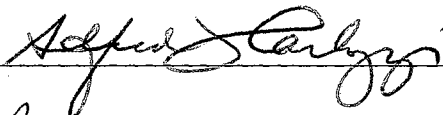
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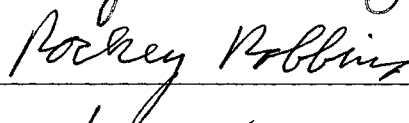
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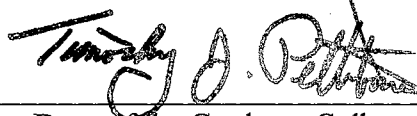
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Dean of the Graduate College

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my brother, Brent Douglas Campbell. You have been a true gift in my life, little brother. As human beings, our siblings are usually the people we know for the longest amount of time. In many ways, from the cradle to the grave, you and I will be true life partners. I cannot imagine another soul with whom I would rather journey through this world than you, Brent. You astound me with your love and unconditional support. May we find our own answers as individuals, but endlessly ponder the questions together. I love you.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

By reviewing the titles and sales numbers of topic-specific books in the “self-help” aisle of local bookstores, or by monitoring the themes of the daytime television talk shows, it may be concluded that many people are seeking to more deeply understand what is required to obtain and sustain satisfying romantic relationships in their lives. Perhaps roused by the separation and divorce rates that are steadily growing in American culture, the desire to understand the complexities of intimate relationships has captured the interest not only of the general public, but a number of our social scientists, as well. Psychologists and other social science researchers have been attempting to empirically discover the correlates and predictors of well-adjusted, satisfying romantic relationships in an effort to inform the public and to aid mental health professionals in their work with those who are struggling to create successful relationships (e.g., Hendrick, 1988; Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1998; Koski & Shaver, 1997). Theoretically derived models designed to extrapolate the components of healthy relationships have guided the research in this area and have produced a substantial list of predictor variables of relationship adjustment (e.g., Feeney, Noller & Roberts, 1998; Noller & Feeney, 1994; Pistole, 1989; Ptacek & Dodge, 1995; Tucker & Anders, 1999). For example, researchers have found that among partnered couples, certain characteristics (e.g., genuine and frequent expressions of love, open communication, a deep sense of trust between partners) tended to predict higher levels of relationship adjustment than did other characteristics (e.g., insecure attachment

with a partner, poor communication skills, a sense of distrust within the relationship) (Bartholomew, 1990).

The correlates and predictors of relationship quality identified by previous researchers are many and varied. However, some researchers have suggested that the degree to which people emotionally “attach” to significant others in their lives is one of the strongest correlates of overall relationship quality, as their comfort with attachment is largely synonymous with how readily they will allow significant others to get emotionally close to them and vice versa (Bartholomew, 1990). For instance, it has been observed that some people tend to feel safe and behave in a generally *secure* manner in their intimate relationships, meaning that they readily enter romantic relationships feeling stable and prepared for an emotional connection with another person. Simply put, they desire and actively pursue secure emotional attachments with their partners. Other people, however, may feel unsafe and behave in a generally *insecure* manner in their intimate relationships. These individuals are more likely to approach their romantic relationships with a higher degree of anxiety, or they may remain emotionally distant within their relationships should they choose to engage in intimate relationships at all. Depending upon the level of insecurity that they feel in their romantic relationships, these individuals may display intense emotional and behavioral conflicts when attaching to a partner, or they may devalue attachment altogether. Several recent studies have looked at the role of attachment and its relation to romantic relationship quality. The findings have suggested that the level with which people emotionally attach to significant others, known in the literature as their “attachment style,” does indeed have a direct correlation with the level of satisfaction that adults report in their intimate relationships (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Perhaps as a result of the university-based positions that many psychological

researchers hold, the vast majority of these attachment studies have been conducted on university campuses. Naturally, students are the most easily accessible participant pool on a university campus, and student samples have been used almost exclusively in attachment research. This practice has produced samples of overwhelmingly youthful participants for these studies. One goal of the current study was to reexamine the relationships among attachment styles and relationship adjustment while using a sample of older, more relationship-experienced individuals who may be more representative of the millions of people in romantic relationships past the age and maturational development typically associated with the average university student.

While some relationship theorists have focused on studying the role of attachment styles in romantic relationships, other researchers have focused on additional variables that may also be correlated with relationship adjustment. One theory suggests that entrenched, maladaptive core beliefs that some people may have about themselves (and others) could have a profound impact on a person's ability to achieve emotional closeness or a sense of parity with their partners (Young, 1994). It has been suggested that the existence of these maladaptive beliefs about oneself and others, or "negative self-schemas," as they have been termed, may have a significant correlation with overall relationship quality. While these negative self-schemas were assumed to be negatively associated with romantic relationship adjustment, that assumption had not been empirically tested or reported in the literature (Young & Gluhoski, 1998). Another purpose of this research, therefore, was to conduct an exploratory study to examine the relationship between negative self-schemas and relationship satisfaction with an adult, non-student sample.

Further, although the unique roles of attachment styles and negative self-schemas are presumed to be related to relationship quality and have been (or are currently being)

employed by researchers as predictor variables in separate relationship adjustment studies, no study had examined the potential relationships between the attachment styles and the negative self-schemas themselves. Discovering if, and how, specific negative self-schemas and specific attachment styles are related could be of considerable importance to mental health professionals who wish to uncover and remove the highly complex blocks that may hinder their clients' attainment of healthy and satisfying relationships.

Extrapolation was required to create a testable theory that indicated a potential link between attachment styles and negative self-schemas. This was successful based upon the similar structure and assumptions of these two constructs, and the manner with which each is thought to function dynamically within an individual. First, previous research findings had suggested that attachment styles and self-schemas are usually shaped during infancy and early childhood as a result of specific interactions with important socializing figures. Second, attachment styles and negative self-schemas are widely believed by researchers to persist through childhood and adolescence into the adult years, and to have a significant impact on the way people approach relationships throughout the lifespan. Third, it has been theorized that securely attached individuals generally received responsive parenting in their childhood and may have developed a "positive mental model" of themselves and others as a result. Adults with insecure adult attachment styles, on the other hand, were theorized to have experienced insensitive or inconsistent care from their parents during their childhood years which may have spawned a "negative mental model" of themselves and others (Bowlby, 1973; Volling, Notaro, & Larsen, 1998). Because each of the 15 negative self-schemas is a unique, maladaptive mental model of self and others formed from specific negative experiences during childhood, it seemed probable that certain schemas would be correlated with certain attachment styles. Based upon the presence of these theoretical links, a study

designed to explore the potential relationships between negative self-schemas and attachment styles seemed theoretically justified. Therefore, the third goal of this study was to explore the potential relationships among negative self-schemas and attachment styles in an adult, non-student sample.

Relationship Adjustment

Researchers who study romantic relationships use different terms to label the state of the relationship. Most common among the labels used are relationship “quality,” “satisfaction,” or “adjustment”. These terms are used interchangeably in most cases, as they were in this study. According to Koski and Shaver (1997), “relationship satisfaction” implies that the basic needs in a relationship have been satisfied or fulfilled by people who assess how their relationship is faring. Satisfying relationships are often labeled “nondistressed,” to distinguish them from relationships that are perceived as troubled, or “distressed” (Koski & Shaver, 1998). Spanier (1989), whose Dyadic Adjustment Scale is the most widely used assessment tool of relationship adjustment in current romantic relationship research, proposed that overall “relationship adjustment” could be determined by assessing specific levels of adjustment in a relationship based upon four behavioral indicators. Those four indicators could then be added together to glean a total picture of how pleased an individual felt with the way relationship was functioning. The four indicators of adjustment of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale are: dyadic consensus (the level of agreement surrounding things deemed important in the relationship), dyadic cohesion (the amount and quality of time spent together on common tasks), affectional expression (the level of agreement surrounding physical intimacy in the relationship), and dyadic satisfaction (the level of perceived stress in the relationship, including how often the individual has considered leaving the relationship). The total adjustment score consisted of adding the scores of these “subscales,” which provided a

number that could be used to assess the overall level of relationship adjustment.

Psychologists and other researchers have been studying various correlates of relationship adjustment for years and have come up with several meaningful variables (Hendrick, 1981; Shapiro, 2000; Feeney Noller, & Roberts, 1998). For instance, researchers have found that there is evidence of a link between relationship satisfaction and the affective mood of either partner. Clark and Watson (1991) found that people chronically high in negative affectivity (often manifested as depression) tended to experience higher levels of anxiety, tension, anger, feelings of rejection, sadness, and more intense reactions to negative stimuli than people with positive affectivity. Each of those emotional states, they found, were significant predictors of relationship dissatisfaction (Clark & Watson, 1991).

In other studies, couples who were identified as having high levels of relationship quality tended to handle conflict in the relationship more effectively than those who were dissatisfied. Satisfied couples tended to express more agreement, more humor, more approval of one another, open expressions of caring for the other, and tended to have more empathy for their partner overall than dissatisfied couples (Feeney, Noller, & Roberts, 1998). In contrast, couples who were classified as having lower levels of relationship quality tended to be more negative in their overall interactions with one another, as evidenced by poor communication styles (e.g., inaccurate perceptions of nonverbal messages, poor listening skills, defensiveness). These couples tended to be more critical, complained more, and expressed more displeasure and hostility than couples who were identified as satisfied in their relationship (Feeney, Noller, & Roberts, 1998).

Other correlates of successful adjustment in partnered couples included the concepts of “autonomy” and “relatedness” in relationships (Rankin-Esquer, Burnett, Baucom, and Epstein, 1997). Autonomy refers to an individual’s perception that his or

her partner encourages a sense of independence and individuality in the relationship while maintaining a healthy emotional connection with their partner. Relatedness, in this study, referred to a spouses' perception of the amount of closeness (emotional and physical) that their partner provided. Couples with the highest degree of overall marital adjustment tended to have stronger communication abilities, felt satisfied with the amount of affection shown to them by their spouses, had few arguments over finances, and worked to develop a caring relationship with their partners' family and friends (Fowers & Olson, 1992).

Attachment in Children and Adults

As stated earlier, the manner with which people attach to their romantic partners has been a focus of researchers who seek to understand the significant correlates of adult relationship adjustment. The term "attachment" can be defined as the quality of emotional connectedness that an individual feels with the significant figures in their life. Attachment theory is based upon the pioneering work of John Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1982), and Mary Ainsworth (1967, 1973), who primarily studied the role of attachment in young children. According to these theorists, humans develop an "internal working model" of others based upon their early experiences with caregivers (attachment figures) during infancy and childhood. The theory proposed that if an infant feels that his or her parent or other primary caregiver is present and caring in times of stress, then the infant will feel more "secure" to explore their environment as a result of the perceived stable base (Bowlby, 1973). Due to the instillment of a secure internal working model of others, the infant develops a deep sense of trust that they are safe and protected, and they are subsequently able to experience a healthy emotional attachment with their caregivers.

Unfortunately, not all infants experience secure relationships or stable home environments. If an infant feels consistently rejected or coolly received by one or more

attachment figures, the infant may develop an insecure sense of self and a generalized distrust of others. In such instances, the infant may begin to avoid people and situations in which they believe that unpleasant interactions may occur. In other cases, infants may be the object of considerable inconsistencies in the behavior of their parents or other attachment figures. If an infant experiences key attachment figures as unpredictable or unreliable in their responsiveness (e.g., their parents are sometimes perceived as warm, responsive, and available, while at other times their parents are incongruously anxious, self-preoccupied, and unpredictable), the infant may begin to feel generally insecure when placed in situations in which they must interact with others (Bowlby, 1982).

Mary Ainsworth and her colleagues (1978) advanced the research examining the role of attachment in children by creating an experimental procedure labeled the “Strange Situation”. During the Strange Situation, 12-month-old infants’ attachment figures, typically their mothers, abruptly left their children alone in an unfamiliar room, and did not return until several minutes later. Ainsworth was able to observe the children’s behavior patterns immediately after their attachment figure left and then again when the attachment figure returned to the room. These in vivo observations, in conjunction with the parents’ self-reports of their infants’ (and their own) behavior at home, allowed Ainsworth to organize attachment behavior patterns into three distinct categories, which she labeled “secure,” “avoidant,” and “anxious.”

Ainsworth et al. (1978) discovered that infants whose attachment behavior was classified as *secure* tended to show initial distress during separations from their caregivers, but they recovered quickly after a joyful reunion with their caregiver. The infants then continued to explore their new environment relatively unfazed. *Avoidant* infants showed little distress when they were separated from their attachment figures, engaged in little exploratory behavior at all points during the study, and avoided their

mothers when they were reunited with them (Ainsworth, 1978). Ainsworth observed that the *anxious* children appeared very distressed when their mothers left the room, and they later demonstrated conflicted reactions when their mothers returned to them. This conflict was observed in infants who physically clung to their mother when she first returned and then protested being held immediately thereafter, as though they were angry with her.

Most researchers who study the role of attachment overwhelmingly believe that attachment behaviors do not end in childhood. According to Bowlby (1982), the need for attachment figures in humans persists “from the cradle to the grave” (p. 208). Weiss (1982) suggested that attachment needs persist into adult relationships due to humans’ continual need for support and reassurance in times of stress. As adults, however, our attachment figures are no longer solely our childhood caregivers; they may also be our peers, our children, and our romantic partners. Several research findings have suggested that the specific attachment behavior patterns an individual forms during infancy and childhood are highly likely to remain relatively unchanged through to adulthood, and these attachment patterns are particularly observable adult romantic relationships (George et al., 1985; Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) and George, Kaplan, and Main (1985) were among the first researchers to test the theory that interpersonal behavior in adult romantic relationships is a biosocial attachment process mirroring the development of child-caregiver bonds in infancy. Their research suggested that the attachment experiences of early childhood greatly influenced adults’ approaches to friendship, romantic love, and other close relationships. Hazan and Shaver developed a theory of adult romantic attachment that was largely based upon Ainsworth et al.’s (1978) three-category classification model of attachment in children. They found that adults could be readily classified into secure, avoidant, and anxious categories of attachment style, just as children

had been.

Research aimed at exploring the role of adult romantic attachment indicated that adults who have a generally secure attachment style tended to be characterized by high levels of interdependence, trust, and commitment in their romantic relationships (Simpson, 1990). These individuals tended to feel comfortable getting close to or depending upon others in times of need (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). People with an avoidant attachment style tended to feel uncomfortable getting emotionally close to others and they defensively denied the need for such intimate connections. Avoidant people tended to reject the idea of dependency on a partner (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), and reported less distress after the dissolution of a romantic relationship compared with people who exhibited a secure or anxious adult attachment style (Simpson, 1990). Adults with an anxious attachment style commonly expressed an intense desire to closely attach with their partners, usually in an attempt to insure the continuation of the attachment relationship, yet those anxiously attached individuals simultaneously experienced a crippling fear of abandonment or rejection. Perhaps as result of this dichotomy, the people who endorsed an anxious attachment style were also more prone to experiencing love at first sight and intense feelings of jealousy than participants who were categorized with a secure or an avoidant attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

While the earliest researchers of adult romantic attachment focused predominantly on the three original attachment styles (i.e., secure, anxious, avoidant) identified by Bowlby (1973) and Ainsworth et al. (1978), another, slightly altered conceptualization of adult attachment emerged (Bartholomew, 1990). The conceptualization of the secure and anxious attachment styles remained largely unchanged, but Bartholomew speculated that people might fit an avoidant attachment style for one of two distinctly different reasons: 1) out of the “fear” of getting close to others (in which case getting emotionally close to

others would be perceived by these individuals to increase the likelihood of potential pain and loss), or, 2) because they held a “dismissive” attitude toward getting close to others (in which case the intrinsic value of relationships would be minimized). This theoretical formulation (i.e., two forms of avoidance) spawned a new, dimensional strategy for conceptualizing adult romantic attachment, with most of the facets of Bowlby (1973) and Ainsworth’s (1969) original theories remaining intact.

According to Bartholomew’s (1990) dimensional conceptualization of adult romantic attachment, vital to understanding and assessing attachment styles is the identification of the particular “views” that people have formed of themselves, and the views that they have generalized of other people. For example, people who have a generally positive view of themselves tend to see themselves as generally lovable, trustworthy, and emotionally stable. A negative view that some people might hold of themselves could entail feeling intense self-doubt or believing that they are unworthy of participating in stable relationships. People who have a positive view of others tend to see potential partners as honest, approachable, and as people with whom they can safely bond. A negative view of others might entail the belief that other people are predominantly untrustworthy, or even intentionally harmful. Bartholomew proposed that these internalized, dimensional views of “self versus others”, formed largely from childhood experiences with caregivers, could be used to conceptualize four principal romantic attachment styles.

From this dimensional orientation, secure adult attachment was characterized as a combination of a positive self-view, or “model”, and a positive model of others. People with a secure attachment, therefore, had an internalized sense of self-worth, were trustful of others, and were comfortable with intimacy in close relationships. A fearful attachment was characterized by a negative self-model and a negative model of others. People with a

fearful attachment style may have longed for intimacy, but they sadly doubted their worthiness of a safe, unconditional love relationship. In addition, as a result of their negative expectations of other people's motives in relationships, people with a fearful attachment style tended to avoid intimacy to avert the pain of what they perceived as inevitable loss or rejection should they allow themselves to be vulnerable. Preoccupied attachment was characterized by a negative self-model and a positive model of others. People who were categorized into the preoccupied attachment style anxiously sought to gain validation from others because their own sense of self-worth was deflated, and they simultaneously placed others in an exalted position. These individuals seemed to proceed from the belief that they could reach a sense of safety or security if they could attain and maintain their partners' acceptance of them. Preoccupied people tended to believe that if they were not constantly pleasing their partners, their partners would leave them. As a result, preoccupied individuals often sacrificed their own needs in an effort to insure a stable relationship. Dismissing attachment was characterized by a positive self-model and a negative model of others. People who were categorized into the dismissing attachment style avoided closeness with others in favor of rigid self-reliance. They tended to believe that they could maintain a sense of self-worth by insulating themselves and devalue intimate relationships altogether. Adults with a dismissing attachment style seemed to actively defend themselves from the potential pain of being hurt in relationships by convincing themselves that the need for close relationships was unnecessary (Bartholomew, 1990).

In the past two decades, researchers have begun to explore the relationships among attachment styles and relationship quality (e.g., Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994). Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that individuals who classified themselves as securely attached reported less fear of

closeness, developed warmer relationships, recalled more positive love experiences, and felt higher levels of general relationship satisfaction than did those who classified themselves as insecurely attached (i.e., one of the avoidant or anxious attachment styles). In longitudinal studies, securely attached individuals have been found to maintain higher levels of relationship satisfaction, commitment, and trust over time compared with insecurely attached persons (Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994). While the related research has suggested that adults with a secure attachment style are more likely to report overall relationship satisfaction than are those individuals with insecure attachments, a common limitation of this research has been that young adults, typically university students, have been the primary participants. Previous researchers have encouraged further attachment studies using older, more heterogeneous populations to confirm and expand upon these findings in an effort to further understand the role of adult attachment in romantic relationships.

Since attachment styles and negative self-schemas remain relatively unchanged, unless deliberately altered through therapy, throughout the lifespan (Bowlby, Weiss, 1982; 1973; Young, 1994), it was hypothesized that each of the four attachment styles measured in this study (i.e., secure, fearful, preoccupied, dismissing) would be significantly correlated with relationship adjustment, as they had been in earlier studies that focused primarily on college-age participants. Previous findings suggested that people who strongly endorsed the secure attachment style tended to report a higher level of relationship adjustment. A significant positive correlation between the secure attachment style and relationship adjustment was likewise expected in this study. Previous studies also found that those individuals who strongly endorsed one of the insecure attachment styles (i.e., fearful, preoccupied, or dismissing) reported a significantly lower level of relationship adjustment than did people with a secure

attachment style (e.g., Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Simpson, 1990). A significant negative correlation among the fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing attachment styles and the level of relationship adjustment was likewise anticipated in this study.

Additionally, it seemed probable that the secure attachment style would be the most important predictor of the total adjustment score. This was hypothesized because a significant majority of securely attached people report high levels of relationship adjustment (e.g., Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Simpson, 1990). Securely attached people tend to be the most expressive, and the most emotionally connected with their partners and themselves. It is anticipated that this level of openness and awareness will be reflected in their certainty about the state of the positive state of their relationship. People who have a fearful or dismissing attachment style may place less emphasis on their relationships as a defensive form of protection. Due to their detachment, they may not as expressive or in-tune with the state of their relationship as people who are actively, securely engaged in it. Further, previous research has suggested that people who have a preoccupied attachment style may feel conflicted in their relationships and report ambiguous reactions to their relationships (Simpson, 1990). For instance, they may feel that they share many of their partner's interests and goals, which are qualities of relationship adjustment, but also feel that they do not get to spend enough time engaged in activities with their partner, which lowers their level of relationship quality. This conflict in interpretation may lead to the lower predictive ability of preoccupied attachment on relationship adjustment.

Negative Self-Schemas

As infants and children interact with their parents and other significant caregivers, they begin to develop core beliefs about themselves in relation to the world (Beck, 1964; Bowlby, 1973). These core beliefs have been termed "self-schemas" in the cognitive

psychology literature (Beck, 1964; Young, 1994). Self-schemas can be thought of as cognitive templates, filters, or lenses through which people process their interpersonal interactions and subsequently determine their reactions to them (Young, 1994).

Ideally, children develop positive, healthy beliefs about themselves and others. This is most likely to occur if the child's core needs (e.g., feeling safe, perceiving parental stability, receiving opportunities to make close emotional connections with others) are met. Unfortunately, some infants and young children are reared in families in which their basic needs for safety, stability, close emotional connections, and other vital socializing events are not realized. Schema theorists believe that in such instances, the onset of enduring, *negative* core beliefs about themselves and others may occur in reaction (Young, 1994).

Young (1994) defined "early maladaptive schemas" as broad and pervasive beliefs regarding oneself and others that children develop as a result of significant negative experiences with caregivers. As children grow into adolescence and adulthood, these maladaptive schemas may become more pervasive, and they may constitute the primary cognitive and emotional obstacles to achieving satisfying interactions with other people, including romantic relationships.

Young (1999) proposed that all people need to feel a sense of security, safety, stability, nurturance, open sharing of feelings, acceptance, and respect. These conditions are considered basic needs that must be met if humans are to develop as healthy social individuals. Should a person have any one of these specific needs consistently unmet, a corresponding negative self-schema(s) could develop. Young (1999) identified 15 unique negative self-schemas that an individual may have developed over the course of their childhood that are firmly manifested by adulthood. He proposed that individuals who endured these specific losses may generalize from their experiences and expect that their

interactions with others as adults will mirror their negative experiences as children. These 15 individual negative self-schemas, while unique and separately defined based upon a specific unmet childhood need, were factored into larger organizational groups, or “domains.”

The first overarching negative self-schema domain is “Disconnection and Rejection.” The five specific negative self-schemas organized under the Disconnection and Rejection domain include: “Emotional Deprivation” (the expectation that one’s desire for emotional support will not be met by others), “Abandonment/ Instability” (the perceived instability or unreliability of support and connection based in the belief that others will suddenly leave them), “Mistrust/ Abuse” (the expectation that others will intentionally harm, humiliate, manipulate, or take advantage of them), “Social Isolation/Alienation” (the feeling that one is isolated, fundamentally different from others, and not a part of any community), and “Defectiveness/Shame” (the belief that one is inherently defective and would be unlovable to significant others if exposed). According to Young, someone who has developed one of the negative self-schemas under this domain may have come from a family that could be characterized as detached, cold, rejecting, withholding of love, emotionally explosive, unpredictable, or abusive.

Young’s (1999) second overarching negative-self schema domain was labeled “Impaired Autonomy and Performance.” It consists of four thematically linked, though individually unique, negative self-schemas that reflect the individual’s expectation that they cannot function independently, perform successfully, or survive without help from others. The four negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain include: “Failure” (the belief that one has failed to achieve relative to others, or that one is untalented, unintelligent, or lower in status compared to others), “Dependence/ Incompetence” (the belief that one is unable to handle everyday responsibilities in a

competent manner without considerable help from others), “Vulnerability to Harm and Illness” (an exaggerated fear that imminent catastrophe, illness or accident, could strike at any time), and “Enmeshment” (the excessive emotional involvement and closeness with others, to the extent that one feels that they could not be happy without the constant support of the other). Young suggested that people with any of the negative self-schemas from this domain may have come from a family that was highly enmeshed, overprotective, and undermining of the child’s confidence by failing to reinforce the child for performing competently outside the family.

The third negative self-schema domain is “Impaired Limits” (Young, 1999). It consists of two negative self-schemas that reflect the person’s difficulty making commitments, respecting the rights of others, cooperating with others, or setting and meeting realistic personal goals. The two negative self-schemas that fall under this domain include: “Entitlement” (the belief that one is superior to others and is entitled to special rights and privileges, or is not bound by rules of reciprocity), and “Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline” (characterized by pervasive difficulty to exercise sufficient self-control or to restrain excessive expression of emotions and impulses). Young proposed that individuals with a negative self-schema(s) from this domain may have come from families that were excessively permissive, overindulgent, or appearing superior to others rather than using appropriate discipline and teaching responsibility. Young suggested that these individuals may not have been pushed to tolerate normal levels of discomfort or they may not have been given adequate supervision during their interactions with others.

The fourth negative self-schema domain is “Other-Directedness.” It consists of two theoretically related negative self-schemas in which individuals exhibit an excessive focus on the desire, feelings, and responses of others at the expense of their own needs. This is usually done to insure love, approval, and continued connection, or to avoid

potential retaliation. It may involve the suppression of one's own needs and feelings, which often leads to the expression of anger. The two negative self-schemas from this domain are: "Subjugation" (the excessive surrendering of control to others because they feel coerced to do so, or else they will induce anger, retaliation, or abandonment from others) and "Self-Sacrifice" (this is the excessive and voluntary focus on others' needs at the expense of their own to prevent pain to others or to avoid feeling guilty). Young (1999) proposed that the family of origin for an individual who presents with either of these negative self-schemas may have been conditionally accepting of the child and withholding of love unless certain criteria were met. For instance, the child may have felt that they had to hide fundamental aspects of themselves in order to gain love, attention, and approval. The child's feelings may not have been taken into account because the parents' emotional needs and desires overshadowed those of the child.

The fifth and final negative self-schema domain is labeled "Overvigilance and Inhibition." The two negative self-schemas within this domain are thematically related to the excessive suppression of spontaneous feelings and impulses, or the excessive efforts to meet rigid, internalized rules and expectations about one's behavior to the point where happiness, self-expression, close relationships, health, and relaxation are lost. The negative self-schemas organized under this domain include: "Emotional Inhibition" (the inhibition of all spontaneous action, feeling, or communication in order to avoid disapproval by others) and "Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness" (the underlying belief that one must strive to meet very high internalized standards of behavior and performance in order to avoid criticism). Young (1999) proposed that these individuals may have come from homes in which their parents were demanding and punitive when the child did not follow rules or behave "perfectly," or when the child did not hide their emotions. These children may have been taught to avoid mistakes at the cost of joy and

play.

Young and Gluhoski (1998) proposed that satisfying, well-adjusted adult romantic relationships can occur only when adults' basic core needs in a relationship are met, just as children required that their core needs be met in order to develop a healthy view of themselves and others. They have theorized that people who are in partnered relationships and who report having a high prevalence of one or more negative self-schemas may not be getting their core needs met, much as they did not when they were children. These unmet needs may be perpetual because the maladaptive beliefs or cognitive scars they carry into adulthood keep them at an emotional distance from others. Or, these individuals may be more prone to engaging in unhealthy relationships with partners who do not meet their needs since it is all they know, or believe that they deserve. Young and Gluhoski suggested that people with negative self-schemas are, in either case, more likely to experience decreased levels of adjustment in their intimate relationships than people with positive negative self-schemas.

While negative self-schemas have been empirically researched and associated with moods such as depression (Kelvin et al., 1999; Drennen, 1991), anxiety (Lang et al. 1983), and anger (Sheader-Wood & Winterowd, 2000), and to other conditions including eating disorders (Geller et al., 2000) and negative body image in women (Eldredge et al., 1990), no known research had explored the relationship of negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment. In an article written to introduce the theory of negative self-schemas and their potential link to relationship adjustment, Young challenged researchers to incorporate the theory in future studies addressing this issue (Young & Gluhoski, 1998).

The relationships among the negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment were explored in this study. Based upon Young and Gluhoski's (1998) supposition that a significant endorsement of any of the 15 negative self-schemas could produce a

substantial block to the development of healthy relationships, it was expected that all of the negative self-schemas from each of the five overarching domains would have significant negative correlations with relationship adjustment. It was unclear, based upon the limits of existing theory and the lack of prior research findings, *which* of the negative self-schemas within the five domains would be most predictive of the level of relationship adjustment, thus the perceived need for an exploratory study of this nature. A goal of this segment of the study was to determine which negative self-schemas from each overarching domain were the most predictive of relationship adjustment in an effort to aid mental health counselors who might benefit from quickly and precisely identifying the maladaptive cognitions that may be harming their clients and their relationships.

The relationships among the negative self-schemas and adult attachment styles were also explored in this study. These variables were expected to be significantly correlated based upon the assumed theoretical links between the constructs. Because each negative self-schema *domain* is thematically defined based upon the unmet needs of an individual and the maladaptive beliefs about oneself and others, it seemed likely that all of the negative self-schemas within each of the domains would be negatively correlated with the secure attachment style. This assumption was based on research that suggested that most people with a secure attachment style were reared in a stable home in which they were consistently loved and supported, and were safe to create emotional attachments with others (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1973). Young (1994) has reported that people who have developed any of the negative self-schemas were probably reared in a home in which one or more of their basic needs for closeness, safety, stability, and acceptance were not met. Therefore, when a secure attachment style was predominant in the individual, it seemed less likely from a theoretical standpoint that significant negative self-schemas would be active within the person.

It was hypothesized that each of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection, Overvigilance and Inhibition, Other-Directedness domains would have a positive correlation with the fearful attachment style. Each of these three domains contains schemas that reflect entrenched beliefs directly related to a fear of others, a rejection of themselves, or trepidation of the world, all of which seemed to be theoretically similar to descriptions of fearful attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). The first domain, Disconnection and Rejection, consists of schemas that were instilled when children did not receive adequate love, affection, respect, or acceptance from their parents. As adults, they may fear that their partner will leave them abruptly (Abandonment/ Instability), that their partner will intentionally harm them or abuse them (Mistrust/Abuse), or that their partner will deprive them of basic nurturance and empathy (Emotional Deprivation). They may believe that they are internally flawed, and assume that their partners will eventually see the flaw and leave them if they allow themselves to be vulnerable (Defectiveness/Shame), or they may believe that they are fundamentally different from other people, and fear that their partner will never be able to truly understand who they are or what they feel (Social Isolation/Alienation).

The Overvigilance and Inhibition domain consists of two negative self-schemas that may have developed in children who were told that they must avoid expressing feelings, or suppress their natural impulses, at the expense of their own happiness, or they may have been told that they were never “good enough.” According to Young (1994), these people were probably reared by parents who had very strict rules, were very punishing, and were never satisfied with their child’s performance. As adults, they may have developed a belief that they must avoid all expressions of emotion or face the disapproval of their partner (Emotional Inhibition), or they may be hypercritical of themselves and feel that they can never meet their own, or their partner’s expectations

(Unrelenting Standards/ Hypercriticalness). It seemed likely that these children may have developed a fear of other people's harsh criticism and a negative view of their own worthiness and abilities, both of which are hallmarks of the fearful attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

The Other-Directedness domain consists of two negative self-schemas that may have developed in children whose parents were very dominant, and whose own needs were considered less important than their parents'. As adults, these people may believe that they are forced to surrender control to others, or else they will face retaliation or abandonment (Subjugation), or they may voluntarily give up their own needs to please others in an effort to feel more secure with their partner (Self-Sacrifice). Both of these schemas entail a belief that they feel trapped, unassertive, or fearful of what will happen if they do not relinquish their own needs. These experiences felt very closely related to previous descriptors of people who have a fearful attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

It was hypothesized that each of the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain would have a positive correlation with the preoccupied attachment style. The basis for this hypothesis stemmed from the specific theme of this domain, which reflects entrenched beliefs that one is dependent or inadequate in some vital way. These people may have been reared by parents who were very overprotective or did not encourage their children to take risks or believe in themselves. As adults, they may believe that they are unable to handle everyday responsibilities without help from others (Dependence/Incompetence), that they cannot be happy or survive without the support of others, at the expense of full individuation (Enmeshment), that they will inevitably appear inadequate to their partners in comparison to their partner's accomplishments (Failure), or they may believe that

imminent catastrophe may strike at any time (Vulnerability to Harm or Illness). These schemas seemed to fit thematically with the descriptions of people who have a positive view of others and a negative view of themselves, a conceptualization of the preoccupied attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Previous research has suggested that people with a preoccupied attachment style tend to place others in an exalted position (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). In earlier studies, people with a preoccupied attachment style have stated that they tend to feel “needy”, or feel that they must “cling” to their partners in an effort to enhance their sense of self-worth (Kobak & Sceery, 1988). They may also exhibit low levels of assertiveness (Collins & Read, 1994). Each of these descriptions of qualities of people with a preoccupied attachment style seemed to be represented by the schemas in the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain.

It was also hypothesized that each of the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Limits domain would have a positive correlation with the dismissing attachment style. According to Young (1994), these children were probably reared by parents who did not teach them the value of responsibility to others, or their parents may have acted superior to the children and to others. As adults, people who have either of these negative self-schemas may believe that they are superior to others and are entitled to special rights and privileges, or they may believe that they should be able to do whatever they want, regardless of the costs to others (Entitlement). They may strive to avoid any amount of pain, responsibility, or conflict (Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline). The themes of these schemas echo the description of people who have a dismissing attachment style. They tend to have a negative view of others, but a positive view of themselves that may be manifested in arrogance or aloofness (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). It was not hard to imagine people with these negative self-schemas dismissing their relationships with others in favor of rigid self-reliance, particularly if their relationships threatened their

self-schema of superiority or entitlement.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was exploratory in nature. The goal was to examine the potential relationships among adult attachment styles and relationship adjustment in an older, non-student population; to explore the potential relationships of the negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment; and to explore the potential relationships of the negative self-schemas and adult attachment styles. Of additional interest is determining which attachment styles are most predictive of relationship adjustment, which negative self-schemas from each of the five domains are most predictive of relationship adjustment, and which negative self-schemas are most predictive of attachment styles.

Significance of Study

Understanding the relationships among the attachment styles and relationship adjustment, negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment, and negative self-schemas and adult attachment styles in an adult, non-student sample may help practitioners in the mental health field to conceptualize and better develop specialized treatment strategies to help their clients create and sustain satisfying romantic relationships. For instance, after identifying their clients' attachment styles, a therapist may be able to quickly pinpoint specific maladaptive schemas known to be associated with those attachment styles. The therapist and client may then map out a strategy to challenge the destructive schemas that may be the barrier to developing healthy relationships. Additionally, Jeffrey Young's (1994) negative self-schema theory is a relatively new and unexplored research domain that appears to be a viable construct worthy of further study and testing. It is believed that this research contributed to further knowledge in those areas.

Research Questions

1. What was the relationship of attachment styles and relationship adjustment? Which of

the four partner attachment styles were the most significant predictors of overall relationship adjustment?

2. What was the relationship of negative self-schemas from each of the five domains and relationship adjustment? Which of the negative self-schemas from each domain were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment?

2a. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Disconnection and Rejection domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?

2b. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?

2c. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Impaired Limits domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?

2d. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Other-Directedness domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?

2e. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?

3. What was the relationship of the negative self-schemas from each of the five domains and attachment styles? Which of the negative self-schemas from each domain were the most significant predictors of attachment styles?

3a. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Secure attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Secure

attachment style from each domain?

3b. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Fearful attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Fearful attachment style from each domain?

3c. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Preoccupied attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Preoccupied attachment style from each domain?

3d. What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Dismissing attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Dismissing attachment style from each domain?

Research Hypotheses

1. It was hypothesized that the secure attachment style would be positively correlated with relationship adjustment. The other “insecure” attachment styles (fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing) were expected to have a significant negative correlation with relationship adjustment. It was hypothesized that the secure attachment style would be the only significant predictor of relationship adjustment in the regression analyses.

2. It was hypothesized that there would be significant negative correlations between negative self-schema scores from each domain and relationship adjustment. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from each domain would be most predictive of relationship adjustment levels.

3a. It was hypothesized that there would be significant negative correlations between negative self-schema scores and secure attachment style levels. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas would be most predictive of the secure attachment style.

3b. It was hypothesized that the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection

and Rejection, Overvigilance and Inhibition, and the Other-Directedness domains would be significantly and positively related to fearful attachment style levels. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas would be most predictive of the fearful attachment style.

3c. It was hypothesized that the negative self-schema scores from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain would be significantly and positively related to preoccupied attachment style levels. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from this domain would be most predictive of the preoccupied attachment style.

3d. It was hypothesized that the negative self-schema scores from the Impaired Limits domain would be significantly and positively related to the dismissing attachment style levels. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from that domain would be most predictive of the dismissing attachment style.

Definition of terms

Adult Attachment Style: The level of comfort with and manner in which a person emotionally bonds with their romantic partner. There are typically three or four adult attachment styles, depending on the theoretical conceptualization the particular researcher endorses. For the purposes of this study, four separate adult attachment styles are identified. According to Bartholomew and Shaver (1998), the four adult romantic attachment styles can be defined as:

1. Secure Attachment Style: “Secure adult attachment is characterized by the combination of a positive self model and a positive model of others. Secure individuals have an internalized sense of self-worth and are comfortable with intimacy in relationships” (p. 31).

2. Fearful Attachment Style: “Fearful attachment is characterized by a negative self model and a negative model of others. Fearful individuals desire acceptance and

affirmation in a romantic relationship; however, because of their negative expectations of others, they avoid intimacy to avoid the pain and loss of rejection” (p. 31).

3. Preoccupied Attachment Style: “Preoccupied attachment is characterized by a negative self model and a positive model of others. Preoccupied individuals anxiously seek to gain acceptance and validation from others, seeming to persist in the belief that they could attain safety, or security, if they could only get others to respond properly to them” (p. 31).

4. Dismissing Attachment Style: “Dismissing attachment is a form of avoidance which is characterized by a positive self model and a negative model of others. Dismissing individuals also avoid closeness because of negative expectations; however, they maintain a sense of self-worth by defensively denying the value of close relationships” (p. 31).

Negative Self-Schemas: Schemas are maladaptive core beliefs and enduring cognitive structures about oneself and other people their environment (Young, 1999). Negative self-schemas are formed during childhood and are elaborated throughout one’s life. They are self-perpetuating, maladaptive, and are very resistant to change. Negative self-schemas often operate without our awareness and we interpret our thoughts, feelings, and experiences through them. They may encompass the primary cognitive and emotional obstacles to satisfying relationships. Young defined 15 specific negative self-schemas that may occur in relationships with significant others. They are categorized into five distinct domains. The five domains and the negative self-schemas factored within each are:

1. Disconnection and Rejection: Negative self-schemas in this domain relate to the expectation that one’s needs for security, safety, stability, nurturance, empathy, sharing of feelings, acceptance, and respect will not be met in a predictable manner. Five schemas are identified within this domain. They are Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Emotional Deprivation, Defectiveness/Shame, and Social Isolation/Alienation.

1a. Abandonment/Instability: The perceived instability or unreliability of those available for support and connection. People who endorse this negative self-schema believe that significant others will not provide emotional support because they will abandon the individual in favor of someone else. They believe that their partners are unpredictable or are emotionally unstable.

1b. Mistrust/Abuse: The expectation that others will intentionally harm, humiliate, manipulate, or take advantage of the individual in some way.

1c. Emotional Deprivation: The belief that the individual's primary needs for emotional support, nurturance, protection, and empathy will not be adequately met by others.

1d. Defectiveness/Shame: The feeling that one is inferior, insignificant, defective, or flawed in some way which will cause others to withdraw from relationships with the individual should they discover the flaw(s).

1e. Social Isolation/Alienation: The assumption that one is isolated from the rest of the world, different from other people, and not part of any group or community

2. Impaired Autonomy and Performance: This domain contains negative self-schemas related to the perceived ability to separate, survive, and function successfully in an independent manner. The schemas in this domain are Dependence/Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm or Illness, Enmeshment/Undeveloped Self, and Failure.

2a. Dependence/Incompetence: The belief that one will be unable to handle everyday responsibilities competently without significant help from others. This negative self-schema often presents as helplessness.

2b. Vulnerability to Harm or Illness: The belief that one is awaiting an imminent and unavoidable medical, emotional, or external (airplane crash, elevator

collapsing) catastrophe of some kind.

2c. Enmeshment/Undeveloped Self: This negative self-schema involves the belief that without excessive emotional involvement, support, and closeness with one or more significant others, the individual cannot survive or be truly happy. Full individuation and normal social development is often compromised as a result of this negative self-schema.

2d. Failure: The belief that one is inadequate or has failed to achieve relative to their peers in areas such as school, sports, or career status.

3. Impaired Limits: This domain contains schemas related to deficiencies in internal limits, responsibility to others, or long-term goal orientation. These negative self-schemas may lead to difficulty respecting the rights of others, making commitments, or setting and meeting realistic personal goals. Negative self-schemas identified in this area include: Entitlement/Grandiosity and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline.

3a. Entitlement/Grandiosity: The belief that one is superior to others and entitled to special privileges and rights. It often involves the idea the one should be able to do, say, or have whatever one wants, regardless of the cost of others. Individuals who endorse this negative self-schema often feel a need to achieve power and control over others.

3b. Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline: The unwillingness or difficulty in restraining the excessive expression of one's emotions. Individuals who endorse this negative self-schema may find it difficult to tolerate any frustration in reaching their goals.

4. Other-Directedness: This domain contains negative self-schemas related to an excessive focus on the desires, feelings, and responses of others, at the expense of one's own needs. The focus that is placed on others is put forth in order to gain love and

approval, to maintain a sense of connection, or to avoid retaliation. The negative self-schemas within this domain include Subjugation and Self-Sacrifice.

4a. Subjugation: Involves the tendency to surrender control to others because they feel coerced to do so, and if they do not, they will be faced with others' anger, retaliation, or abandonment. Due to their sense of being "trapped", people who endorse this negative self-schema often suppress their own needs or emotional expression, which may then lead to a build-up of anger. This anger may be manifested in passive-aggressive behavior, uncontrolled outbursts of temper, psychosomatic symptoms, and a withdrawal of affection.

4b. Self-Sacrifice: The excessive voluntary sacrifice of one's own needs in order to help others avoid pain or discomfort. This negative self-schema also serves to protect an individual from feeling guilty of selfishness and to maintain strong ties with others whom the individual perceives as needy.

5. Overvigilance and Inhibition: This domain contains negative self-schemas related to placing excessive emphasis on suppressing spontaneous feelings and impulses, or insistence upon meeting rigid, internalized rules and expectations at the expense of health, happiness, relaxation, and close relationships. The negative self-schemas which comprise this domain include Emotional Inhibition and Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness.

5a. Emotional Inhibition: The belief that emotions and impulses must be inhibited, or negative consequences such as disapproval by others, feelings of shame, or loss of control. The most common areas of inhibition involve withholding the expression of anger and aggression, positive impulses such as joy and sexual excitement, and difficulty communicating, expressing vulnerability, and rationalization while disregarding emotions.

5b. Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness: Involves an underlying belief that one must strive to meet very high internalized standards of behavior and performance in order to avoid criticism. It typically results in feelings of pressure or difficulty slowing down and hypercriticalness toward oneself and others, and impairs pleasure, relaxation, self-esteem, and satisfying relationships. These unrelenting standards may present as perfectionism, rigid rules about how things “should” be, and an excessive preoccupation with time and efficiency.

Relationship Adjustment: Spanier (1989) proposed that overall relationship adjustment could be determined by assessing specific qualities in relationships based upon four measures of adjustment: dyadic consensus, dyadic cohesion, affectional expression, and dyadic satisfaction within the relationship.

1. Dyadic Consensus: the extent of agreement on matters deemed important to the relationship. These important matters may include money, religion, recreation, friends, household tasks, and time spent together.

2. Dyadic Cohesion: the extent to which the couple shares common interests.

3. Affectional Expression: the level of satisfaction with the expression of affection and sex in the relationship.

4. Dyadic Satisfaction: the amount of tension in the relationship, as well as the extent to which the individual has considered ending the relationship.

Assumptions

1. Participants will answer all assessments openly and honestly and with equal motivation.

2. The measures used in this study will capture a true representation of participants' adult attachment style, negative self-schemas, and level of relationship adjustment.

3. The participants will be representative of a general adult population rather than a clinical population.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The following literature review will demonstrate a need for further empirical research that examines the relationships among adult partner attachment styles, negative self-schemas, and relationship adjustment. The basic tenets of attachment theory will be explored. Conceptual models of adult partner attachment styles and their potential relationship with relationship adjustment will be explained. Next, a description of negative self-schemas will be provided. A theoretical model proposing the potential relationships among negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment, and negative self-schemas and attachment styles, will be introduced.

Models of attachment theory in childhood

At the heart of attachment theory lies the idea that infants are innately equipped with what pioneering attachment researcher John Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1979, 1980) termed an “attachment behavioral system”. Bowlby developed his theories on infant attachment based upon evolutionary principles of survival. He proposed that infants are internally “pre-wired” with a protective system that is designed to help keep them safe and in close physical proximity to their parents or other significant caregivers. Bowlby theorized that the attachment behavioral system is composed of specific emotional and behavioral responses that activate whenever an infant feels vulnerable. For example, Bowlby proposed that an infant naturally develops an emotional, dependent connection with a parent or other caregiver. If the infant realizes that their caregiver has left them

alone, they emotionally register the loss and begin to cry for and crawl toward their parent in an effort to reestablish contact. According to Bowlby, the development of this system has been profoundly relevant to the survival of the species. Common sense dictates that a relatively weak and inexperienced infant who remained in close contact with its stronger and more experienced caregiver had a significantly greater chance of surviving commonplace life-threatening dangers (e.g., predators, hunger, the elements) if the likelihood of continued protection by the caregiver was enhanced *by the infant*. Infants who possessed these behavioral attachment traits, Bowlby hypothesized, would have been more likely to live to reproductive age, reproduce, and then pass on the attachment behavioral system to future generations, thereby increasing future generations' chances of survival.

Bowlby (1969) hypothesized that an infant ideally bonds with its “attachment figures”, usually a mother, father, or other regularly present caregivers, and uses the safety of the bond formed with their attachment figure to explore their world in relative security. When an attachment figure is present and reliable, the infant feels secure and can play or investigate their surroundings comfortably while their attachment behavioral system remains dormant. However, should the attachment figure leave the infant's vicinity, or should the environment in which the infant exists seem dangerous or unpredictable, the attachment behavioral system instinctively activates within the child and the reconnection behavior commences.

During his studies of infants, Bowlby (1973, 1980) found that infants whose attachment figures were usually present when the infant was exposed to a new or potentially frightening situation, and were behaviorally consistent and emotionally stable when responding to the infant in those uncertain times, typically developed a “secure” sense of the world around them. These infants were likely to exhibit calm and relaxed

behavior in unfamiliar, threatening situations. Bowlby believed that this sense of security was an indicator that a secure “internal working model” of the world and the people in it had been created, through which the infant had come to gauge themselves and others in their environment as reliable and protective. However, if an infant experienced the attachment figure as absent in times of situational distress, or if the infant perceived the attachment figure as behaviorally and emotionally unstable during frightening experiences, the infant was more likely to develop an “insecure” internal working model of themselves and others. Bowlby noted that the development of an insecure internal working model seemed highly correlated to the child’s generalized anxiety around, distrust of, and, or in some cases, avoidance of, their attachment figures. Bowlby (1980) suggested that should the unstable experiences continue unresolved despite the infant’s behavioral and emotional attempts to create or regain a stable connection with the caregiver, the child may develop an *enduring* protest against, despair for, or detachment from the attachment figures in their life.

Mary Ainsworth (1967) was another early pioneer of infant and childhood attachment research. The “Strange Situation” was the name given to the laboratory procedure designed by Ainsworth and her colleagues to observe the attachment processes of 12 month-old infants (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). Mothers and their infant children were asked to come to a laboratory in which various toys and other objects were lying about the observation room. The mothers were required to stay in the room with their infant as they acclimated to their new surroundings. During this time, Ainsworth carefully observed and recorded from behind a one-way mirror the activities and perceived emotional state of the children as they reacted in their new environment. The activation of the infant’s attachment behavioral system was induced when the researchers asked the infants’ mothers to abruptly leave their child alone the playroom

and then return to their children after several minutes had passed. The patterns of the resulting behaviors and emotional states were observed and recorded. As a product of these studies, Ainsworth et al. were able to identify three general categories of attachment behavior based upon the infants' reactions to both the initial surprise separation, and the subsequent return of their caregivers.

Infants whom Ainsworth et al. (1978) classified as having a "secure" attachment style showed, when separated from their attachment figure, physical and emotional distress that typically consisted of crying and/or crawling toward the door through which the attachment figure left the room. Ainsworth noted that the secure infants quickly recovered upon the return of their caregiver and recommenced whatever play or exploration they had been actively engaged in prior to the caregiver's departure.

The infants whom Ainsworth et al. (1978) classified as having an "avoidant" attachment style showed comparatively little distress when their attachment figure abruptly left them alone. Ainsworth noted that it was common for the avoidant infants to be relatively unengaged in play or exploratory behavior prior to their caregiver's leaving or after their caregiver's return to the room. Another common behavior of the avoidant infant was the tendency for the infant to ignore their caregiver when she returned as though oblivious or unfazed by her reemergence.

Those infants whom Ainsworth et al. (1978) classified as having an "anxious" attachment style showed intense physical and emotional distress when their attachment figure left the room, as evidenced by constant crying until their attachment figure returned. Both prior to their caregiver's leaving and after their return, the anxious infants were observed to spend far less time exploring their environment than did the securely attached infants. Further, anxious infants exhibited conflicted responses when their caregiver returned. Ainsworth et al. observed that a common behavior exhibited by the

anxious infants was to cling to their caregiver briefly, as though to acknowledge that the caregiver had come back, and then to angrily resist the caregiver's attempts to comfort them thereafter.

In terms of specific attachment style related behaviors, Ainsworth et al. (1978) found that infants who were classified as securely attached greeted their caregiver upon return with joy and affection, cried less than insecure infants, and responded more positively to being held than did children classified into other attachment styles. Subsequent research noted that the caregivers of secure children were observed to be more responsive to their infant's crying, were in more physical contact with the child, and were more emotionally expressive with the child in comparison to the caregivers of children who were classified into an anxious or avoidant attachment style (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Isabella, Rovine, & Taylor, 1984). Ainsworth et al. observed that avoidant children cried more during the Strange Situation, mirroring their crying behavior at home (according to parents' self-report), than did infants classified as having a secure attachment style. Ainsworth et al. (1978) observed that the caregivers of avoidant infants tended to be emotionally rigid with their children and were often angry with, or rejecting of them. Further, the caregivers of avoidant children reported that they did not enjoy or initiate physical contact with their child as often as the caregivers of securely attached children. In additional studies (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Isabella et al., 1989) researchers found that anxious infants cried more and exhibited more anger than infants classified as having a secure attachment style. It was proposed that the anxious behaviors exhibited by the infants classified as having an anxious attachment style might be due to inconsistent responsiveness from their caregiver during times of distress (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

A fourth infant attachment style was later added to the literature on attachment theory, though it has not gained the same widespread validation as the three original

styles. Main, Kaplan, and Cassidy (1985) found that some infants seemed to fit best into a “disorganized” attachment category. They reported that some children who participated in the Strange Situation exhibited odd or awkward behaviors when their caregiver returned to the room. For example, they approached their caregiver initially, and then stopped suddenly, diverting their gaze from the caregiver. Main et al. (1990) proposed that the childrens’ odd, or disorganized, behavior may be an indication of their attachment figures’ predominantly helpless, frightened, or frightening behavior in front of the child. Some researchers believe that the disorganized behavior identified by Main et al. was misidentified a form of anxious attachment (Bartholomew, 1990).

Research designed to deepen the understanding of childhood attachment became more widespread in the years following the groundbreaking studies of Bowlby (1973) and Ainsworth et al. (1978). Although early research in the area largely restricted its focus to mothers as the primary caregivers, eventually fathers, extended family, friends in the child’s peer group, and daycare workers were recognized for their roles as attachment figures in the lives of children, particularly as children grow older (Main & Weston, 1981; Oppenheim, 1988). These studies suggested that most children have several significant attachment figures in their lives at any one time. However, parents are considered the most influential attachment figures because they are typically around the child for the most amount of time and tend to be the people children look to as models. These attachment figures not only provide protection for children, but they may be necessary to help children balance their world-views of themselves and others as they mature. It has been proposed that children who have a secure attachment to at least one attachment figure may be able to compensate to some degree for insecure attachments they may have formed with unreliable or non-protective caregivers as infants (Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997).

Researchers have observed that as infants mature into children, their attachment behavior patterns are typically analogous to the attachment behaviors they exhibited during infancy. Research has indicated that children who exhibited a secure attachment style as infants tended to establish openly expressive, warm, nurturing, and generally satisfying interactions with people as they grew (Main et al, 1985; Troy & Stroufe, 1987). Additionally, secure youngsters were comfortable with interdependency, and were likely to seek help or comfort from parents or friends when they needed it (Grossmann & Grossmann, 1991). Studies have suggested that many children who were anxiously attached tended to believe that they were helpless, they seemed to have difficulty interacting with others, they reported more social loneliness, and they were more likely to be victimized by peers than children with secure attachment styles. Children classified as having an avoidant attachment style tended to deny their need for close relationships and they often suppressed their feelings (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994).

As children mature into adolescence, they typically develop more complex relationships with a larger variety of people than they did as children. As a result, the types of attachments forged and the kinds of attachment figures adolescents seek also become more complex. Armsden and Greenberg (1987) were among the first researchers to study and subsequently develop a measure of adolescent attachment. The results of the research employing their measure, the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment, indicated that the quality of parent and peer attachments in adolescence was highly related to well-being, and particularly to self-esteem and overall life-satisfaction. The study found that securely attached adolescents were significantly more likely to communicate openly with their parents and peers, which corroborates similar findings of attachment behavior in younger children (Troy & Stroufe, 1987). Adolescents who were securely attached to their parents were found to be better adjusted to life in general than those who had an

insecure attachment style (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).

Models of attachment theory in adult relationships

While attachment research that focused on infants, children, and adolescents garnered attention in the 1970s and early 1980s (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1973, 1980; Main et al., 1985), research emphasizing adult attachments did not begin to flourish until the late 1980s and early 1990s (Bartholomew, 1990; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Since that time, several researchers have endeavored to apply attachment theory in the study of adult relationships (Simpson & Rholes, 1998). Empirical evidence from several studies suggested that attachment patterns extend into adulthood, and might be observable within the domains of close peer relationships, parenting behaviors, and particularly in adult romantic relationships (Bartholomew, 1990; Weiss, 1982).

Weiss (1982) noted that it was impossible to discount the probability that some form of the attachment behavioral system remained past childhood, since most adults continued to make emotional connections, worked to maintain them, and mourned the loss of those attachments when the relationship ended, even though these attachments are no longer necessary for survival. Weiss proposed that attachment behavior continues altered into adulthood, but for a purpose more elevated than pure survival. Weiss suggested that most adults are capable of taking care of themselves and ensuring their basic survival needs, and no longer cry out for an attachment figure to protect them. He proposed that the underlying emotional connection is the component of the attachment system that remains as active in adults as it did in children, and functions to insure support and assurance in times of stress. Weiss suggested that adult attachments are also different from childhood attachments because they are ideally reciprocal and are commonly formed among peers, whereas parent-child attachments were unbalanced in terms of caregiving

and carereceiving.

To test the theory that attachment processes endure past childhood, Trinke and Bartholomew (1997) conducted a study of young adults' attachment behaviors based upon the criteria Bowlby (1973) originally proposed as the necessary criteria for an attachment to form: 1) the attachment figure provides a safe haven in times of distress, 2) the attachment figure is thought of as a secure base from which to venture out independently, 3) there is a strong emotional tie to the attachment figure, whether positive or negative, 4) there is a strong proximity-seeking drive, and 5) there is mourning over the loss of the attachment figure. Based upon the responses of 223 participants, Trinke and Bartholomew found that older adolescents and young adults have people in their life who meet that criteria. In fact, they have, on average, five attachment figures, regardless of whether those are secure or insecure attachments, and regardless of gender differences. The participants ranked their most valued attachment figures based upon Bowlby's original criteria. Results indicated that the most valued attachment figure was the participants' romantic partner, followed by their mother, father, siblings, and best friend (Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997). This study supports the theory proposed by Hazan and Zeifman (1994) that in late adolescence and adulthood, adult attachment bonds are almost always centered around romantic partners or parents.

Social scientists who have studied adult romantic attachments have continued to support the position that the attachment concepts first developed by Bowlby (1973) and Ainsworth (1967) are quite applicable to adult romantic relationships (Bartholomew, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Pistole, 1989). Many adult-focused attachment researchers believe that romantic love is fundamentally an attachment process through which affectional bonds are formed (Weiss, 1982; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). It has been suggested that the three patterns of childhood attachment that Ainsworth et al. (1978) originally

documented mirror the three primary styles of adult romantic attachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

The three category model of adult romantic attachment

In 1987, researchers Cindy Hazan and Philip Shaver published their seminal article on adult romantic attachment, ushering in the adult romantic attachment research that has since followed. Hazan and Shaver (1987) studied predictors of adolescent and adult loneliness and theorized that most significantly lonely young adults might be experiencing chronic loneliness as a result of the unsuccessful formation of secure romantic attachments. They proposed that the inability to establish a secure romantic attachment in adulthood may be correlated to the unfruitful search for a secure parental attachment in infancy and childhood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) proposed that romantic love is a biosocial attachment process that works similarly to the way infants and children bond to their parents. They hypothesized that adults would exhibit secure, anxious, or avoidant attachment styles with their romantic partners similar to the styles Ainsworth et al. (1978) identified in children because the “internal working models” (Bowlby, 1973) that assessed the safety and reliability of attachment figures in childhood continue into adulthood. Hazan and Shaver (1987) predicted that they would find roughly the same percentages of adults categorized into the three attachment styles as had been reported in research assessing children (62% secure, 23% avoidant, and 15% anxious) (Campos et al., 1983).

Hazan and Shaver (1987), developed a self-report measure designed to classify partnered adults into the three previously outlined attachment categories. The measure they created was a 56-item questionnaire that contained items pertaining to the participant’s most important romantic relationship, the qualities of the various romantic relationships in which the individual had been involved (e.g., length of those relationships,

number of times the individual had been in love), demographic information, and items designed to assess the participants' attachment patterns from their childhood and adulthood relationships. At the end of the questionnaire were three brief statements that described different behavioral approaches to romantic relationships. The participants were asked to choose the one statement that most clearly fit their own approach to romantic relationships. The statements read: 1) "I find it relatively easy to get close to others and I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me," indicating secure attachment. 2) "I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others. I find it difficult to trust them and difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being," indicating avoidant attachment. 3) "I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away," indicating anxious attachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Of the 620 participants who took part in the study, 205 were men and 415 were women, and they represented an age range from 14 to 82, with a mean age of 36. Individuals who chose to participate in the study responded to a questionnaire in the newspaper titled the "Love Quiz," and returned the completed form to Hazan and Shaver (1987). Of the usable replies, 56% of the participants classified themselves as secure, 25% classified themselves as avoidant, and 19% classified themselves as anxious. This breakdown of the styles confirmed the researchers' theory that similar percentages between adult and childhood attachment styles would be found.

Based upon the results of their exhaustive analysis, Hazan and Shaver (1987)

concluded that patterns of adult partner attachment styles closely mirrored childhood attachment styles, and found support that the three separate patterns existed. To validate the results of their first study, Hazan and Shaver replicated their procedure several months later with new participants and found similar results. They also reported that adults who identified themselves as having a “secure” attachment style expressed their love experiences as especially happy, friendly, and trusting. These individuals emphasized being able to accept and support their partner despite the partner’s faults. Individuals who endorsed the secure attachment style also tended to have longer lasting relationships. Those participants who endorsed the avoidant attachment style tended to have a significant fear of intimacy and experienced less happiness and trust in their relationships. Participants who endorsed the anxious attachment style were more likely to experience obsessive love, reported greater emotional highs and lows, and reported higher levels of extreme sexual attraction and jealousy than did people who endorsed a secure or anxious attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) reported that the best predictors of adult attachment patterns were the participants’ perceptions of the quality of their relationship with each parent, and the perceived quality of the parents’ relationship with each other. Securely attached participants described warmer relationships with their parents than did insecurely attached individuals. Avoidant participants reported that their mothers were generally more cold and rejecting than those of the other attachment styles. Another important finding suggested that the participants’ attachment style was influenced by beliefs about oneself and about social relationships. For instance, anxious adults were found to have more self-doubts and they reported that they often felt misunderstood by others, whereas secure adults felt well-liked and believed others to be generally well-intentioned (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Volling, Notaro, and Larsen (1998) presented similar

findings that indicated that secure individuals who generally received responsive parenting in their childhood developed a positive mental model of themselves and others. Adults with insecure adult attachment styles, on the other hand, were found to have experienced insensitive or inconsistent care from their parents during their childhood years which may have spawned a negative mental model of themselves and others.

Following the Hazan and Shaver (1987) studies, additional research of adult romantic attachment was conducted using the triadic adult attachment model for conceptualization. These studies replicated many of the earlier studies and found support for the fundamental findings of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) research pertaining to adult attachment in romantic relationships (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; George et al., 1984). With multiple researchers studying adult attachment, some alterations of the theory naturally emerged. One of the most substantial alterations was the introduction of a four category model of adult attachment in romantic relationships (Bartholomew, 1990; Brennan et al., 1998)

The four category model of adult romantic attachment

While studies focusing on the three-category conceptualization of adult attachment (i.e., secure, anxious, avoidant) were producing meaningful data in attachment research, a slightly refined conceptualization of adult attachment was in development. Kim Bartholomew (1990) theorized that adults might endorse an "avoidant" attachment style for different reasons. A single avoidant category, she proposed, might obscure conceptually separable patterns of avoidance in adult romantic attachment. For example, it seemed feasible that some people might endorse an avoidant attachment style as a result of their underlying fear of getting close to others, whereas other people might exhibit an avoidant attachment style due to a projected lack of interest in, or devaluing of, close romantic relationships. Bartholomew hypothesized that many "fearful-avoidant"

individuals may deeply wish to develop partnered relationships, but avoid them for fear that they would inevitably be hurt in a close relationship, possibly as they were hurt in close relationships as children. “Dismissive-avoidant” individuals, on the other hand, may not wish to be in partnered relationships because they choose not to value close connection to others in favor of rigid self-reliance (Bartholomew, 1990). Bartholomew proposed that these individuals may also unconsciously desire attachments with others, but coped with their own painful relationships with childhood attachment figures by suppressing those desires. Instead, they developed highly self-sufficient, even self-absorbed, reliance on themselves. Bartholomew incorporated the secure and anxious attachment styles identified in previous research into the new conceptualization of adult attachment.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) published a paper that refined the theoretical underpinnings of the newly developed four-category classification scheme by drawing upon Bowlby’s (1973) principal attachment concept of internal working model of “self versus other”. They proposed that a person’s internal model of themselves can be broken down into a generally “positive” or “negative” view. Someone who has a generally positive view of themselves tends to believe that they are worthy of love, stable, and trustworthy. Someone who holds a negative view of themselves may believe the opposite about themselves, and feel that they do not deserve a loving relationship. Likewise, a person’s generalized model of others may also be broken down into a positive or negative view, reflective of whether they believe others to be trustworthy and emotionally available or unreliable and rejecting.

The dimensional perspective of a negative or positive model of self versus other can be represented by four distinct cells in Bartholomew and Horowitz’s (1991) four-category model of romantic attachment. Cell I is representative of people who have a

positive view of self and a positive view of others. They may believe that they are lovable and deserving of close relationships and they expect that other people will be generally accepting and responsive to them. Cell I is labeled “Secure”, as it corresponds conceptually with the secure attachment category in the previous attachment research of Hazan and Shaver (1987)

Cell II is representative of people with a negative view of self and a positive view of others. People categorized by this combination of beliefs may believe that they are unworthy of love, but obsessively long for closeness, validation, and acceptance of others. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) labeled this combination “Preoccupied”, reflective of the desperate nature with which these people seek acceptance from others. Preoccupied attachment corresponds conceptually to Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) anxious attachment style.

Cell III is representative of people who have a negative view of themselves and others. People who hold these views might believe that they are unworthy of love in combination with an expectation that others will be untrustworthy or ultimately rejecting of them. By avoiding close attachment to others, people who fall into this category may be preemptively protecting themselves against anticipated rejection by others. This style is labeled “Fearful” attachment, and was theorized to be a derivation of the avoidant category in Hazan and Shaver’s tripartite (1987) model of adult relationship attachment.

Cell IV is representative of people who have a positive view of themselves and a negative view of others. These individuals were thought to have an elevated sense of self-love and self-reliance, combined with stated indifference of the value of intimate relationships. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed that these people are ultimately protecting themselves against disappointment by denying their need for closeness with other people. These people may unconsciously desire close relationships,

but their defenses protect them from the possible pain of rejection by keeping them distanced and aloof and extremely self-reliant. This style is labeled “Dismissing”, and was thought to be a second derivation of Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) avoidant attachment style.

To test the four-category conceptual model of adult attachment, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) altered Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) three-category measure by breaking the avoidant attachment item into the two refined statements designed to assess the participants attachment styles: fearful and dismissing attachment. Additionally, Bartholomew and Horowitz also proposed that attachment in romantic relationships would be better assessed using a continuous measure of attachment rather than a Hazan and Shaver’s “forced-pick,” categorical measure. Participants who completed Bartholomew and Horowitz’s Relationships Questionnaire (RQ), ranked how closely *each* of the four descriptive statements of attachment fit their behavior in intimate relationships using a seven-point Likert-type scale. The items on the RQ read: 1) “It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don’t worry about being alone or having others not accept me,” which was a measure of the “secure” attachment style. 2) “I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others,” which was a measure of the “fearful” attachment style. 3) “I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others won’t value me as much as I value them,” which was a measure of the

“preoccupied” attachment style. 4) “I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me,” which was a measure of the dismissing attachment style.

In the first study, 77 undergraduate students, 40 females and 37 males, ranging in age from 18 to 22, completed the RQ and responded to other items designed to assess their attachment orientations to family, friendship, and romantic relationships. The results of their analyses suggested that the four category-model was supported theoretically and statistically. Personality correlates and interpersonal functioning for the level of each attachment style were also extracted from the research. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) found that predominantly secure people had higher ratings of intimacy in friendships and romantic relationships, deeper levels of warmth toward themselves and others, a balanced sense of control in their relationships, and a higher level of “involvement” in romantic relationships than did individuals who reported a predominant attachment preference aligned with one of the insecure attachment styles. People with high levels of the dismissing attachment style reported higher self-confidence, but scored lower than individuals who reported high levels of secure and preoccupied attachment on all scales reflecting closeness in personal relationships, including self-disclosure, intimacy, emotional expressiveness, level of romantic involvement, the capacity to rely on others, and thinking of others as a secure base. Participants who reported high levels of dismissing attachment also rated the value of caregiving as low and showed a significant need for control in friendships and in romantic relationships. The participants who reported higher levels of preoccupied attachment were the opposite of the dismissing group in almost every respect. They showed high levels of self-disclosure, emotional expressiveness, frequency of crying, reliance on others, using others as a secure base, and

frequent caregiving, but they scored much lower on self-confidence ratings than did those high in dismissing attachment levels. Finally, the participants who endorsed higher levels of the fearful attachment style scored lower on levels of self-disclosure, intimacy, level of romantic attachment, reliance on others, and use of others as a secure base when upset than people with the other attachment styles. Fearful participants reported lower levels of self confidence and balance of control in friendships and romantic relationships. The only significant gender difference findings indicated that female participants tended to report higher levels of the preoccupied attachment style than did male participants, and male participants tended to report higher levels of the dismissing attachment style than did female participants (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) conducted a second study to further substantiate the effectiveness of the four-category model and the continuous measure they created. The study consisted of 69 participants, 33 females and 36 males, who ranged in age from 17 to 24, with a mean age of 19.5. In that study, family members of the participants were also asked to fill out questionnaires designed to assess their perceptions of the participants' attachment styles. The primary focus of the study, however, was to investigate whether continuous ratings of attachment styles could provide more precise measurements of individual differences than categorical measures. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) found that several participants reported that they approached romantic relationships with a blending of the attachment styles, though most participants had a predominant orientation toward one of the four attachment styles. Bartholomew and Horowitz concluded that a considerable amount of individual variability in attachment styles was lost when the four continuous ratings were collapsed into a simple, "forced-pick" categorical classification.

Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) conducted further studies to confirm the validity,

reliability, and utility of the self versus other dimensional, four category conceptualization of attachment proposed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). They conducted three separate studies consisting of 69, 77, and 78 coupled college students with a mean age of 19.5, 19.6, and 24.5 years, respectively. The participants were interviewed and given the Relationships Questionnaire, their closest friends were interviewed, and the participants' overall romantic patterns were examined. The researchers found strong support for the construct validity of the self versus other dimensions as a measure of adult attachment. The dimensional measure showed both discriminant and convergent validity. Their conclusions added more support of previous findings that measuring attachment based on Bowlby's (1973) self versus view of others is valid and reliable.

After Bartholomew (1990) proposed the two dimensional-four category model of adult attachment, other researchers have proceeded from that theoretical base. One of the most recent contributions was the creation of Brennan, Clark and Shaver's (1998) Experience of Close Relationships Scale (ECR). The ECR was based on an exhaustive review of the adult attachment literature and measurement scales to date. This scale was derived from a factor analysis of 60 constructs represented by 482 items taken from all of the major scales of adult attachment (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Collins & Read, 1990; etc.) The ECR consisted of a series of questions which were designed to measure the dimensions of "avoidance of others", and "anxiety within the self", that pertain to the participants' approach to partnered relationships. Based upon low or high scores on the dimensions of anxiety and avoidance, individuals could then be categorized into one of Bartholomew's (1990) four categories of partner attachment.

The table below demonstrates how the anxiety and avoidance dimensions were measured directly by the ECR and were translated into Bartholomew and Horowitz's

(1991) categories of attachment. For example, participants who reported a low level of avoidance toward emotional connectedness with their partners, in combination with low anxiety reflecting concerns about being vulnerable, were believed to have a “secure” attachment, according to both the ECR and Bartholomew (1990) criteria.

<u>Bartholomew's four types</u>	<u>Experience of Close Relationships</u>	
	Avoidance	Anxiety
Secure	low	low
Fearful	high	high
Preoccupied	low	high
Dismissive	high	low

Qualities of the adult attachment styles in romantic relationships

Several studies have focused on the cognitive, behavioral, and personality correlates that are exhibited in people with various levels of attachment styles (e.g., Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992; Guerrero, 1996). Some of the earliest studies of romantic attachment (e.g., Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Levy & Davis, 1988; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989) found that people with high levels of secure attachment were most able to acknowledge personal distress and ask for support when they needed it. Further, they were able to modulate their experiences, which aids in problem solving with their partners (Kobak & Sceery, 1988). The same study suggested that people with high levels of the preoccupied attachment style were more likely to exhibit clinging behaviors, neediness, and ambivalent feelings in their relationships. These individuals were prone to high levels of anxiety and obsessiveness over their relationships. Kobak & Sceery noted that people who had high levels of the avoidant attachment style (they did not separate avoidant attachment into fearful/dismissing styles) tended to dismiss their

personal distress, exhibited more hostility toward others, and were more sensitive to rejection.

A study by Levy and Davis (1988) concluded that a high level of the secure attachment style was positively associated with mutually focused conflict strategies, while the anxious and avoidant attachment styles were negatively associated with such mutuality. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) found that securely attached people were described by their peers as being more ego resilient, less anxious, and less hostile than individuals with higher levels of insecure attachment styles. The study also provided evidence that within romantic relationships, the secure style tends to be associated with adaptive styles of love, greater self-esteem, greater self-confidence, and less anxiety than the other attachment styles (Hendrick & Davis, 1989).

Simpson (1990) embarked on a longitudinal study to assess the influence of attachment styles on romantic relationships over time. The participants included 144 dating couples, at least one member of which was a student enrolled in an undergraduate psychology course. The mean age of the men in the study was 19.4 years and the mean age of the women was 18.7. The average length of the dating relationship was 13.5 months. Their attachment styles were assessed using Hazan and Shaver's three category assessment, though Simpson altered the items to have the participants rate each style continuously as opposed to forcing them to choose only one classification. Other measures assessed the levels of trust, interdependence, and commitment that each participant felt existed in the relationship. The participants were also asked to report how frequently they experienced 28 preselected emotions (e.g., excitement, joy, passion, jealousy, hostility) over the course of the relationship. Simpson found that, for both men and women, a higher endorsement of the secure attachment style was associated with greater relationship interdependence, commitment, and trust, than was experienced by

individuals who had higher levels of the anxious or avoidant attachment styles. The anxious and avoidant styles were associated with fewer reports of positive emotions and more frequent reports of negative ones, though this was particularly the case with higher levels of the avoidant attachment style. A six-month follow up revealed that among the couples who broke up, men who endorsed a high level of the avoidant attachment style experienced significantly less post-dissolution emotional distress than did the men who endorsed a higher level of the secure or anxious attachment styles. Simpson (1990) also reported that an individual's attachment style, while not completely immune to some change over the course of time, did not seem to alter from relationship to relationship. In other words, the findings suggested that the attachment styles were not found to be contingent upon the attachment style of one's partner. This discovery implied that a person's attachment style does not seem to be relationship specific, but that it is held as a steady, trait-like approach to all romantic relationships.

Collins and Read (1990) conducted a massive study assessing adult attachment qualities in romantic relationships. In the first phase of the study, participants included of 406 undergraduate students, consisting of 206 females and 184 males (16 participants did not report their gender), ranging in age from 17 to 37, with a mean age of 18.8 years. Collins and Read (1990) used a derivation of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) three-category measure of attachment style that was created by breaking down the three descriptive paragraphs into 15 individual items, five items per attachment category. Collins and Read added several additional questions designed to assess attachment style, and named the new measure the Adult Attachment Scale. Other measures used in the study assessed self-esteem, locus of control, and interpersonal qualities such as expressiveness and responsiveness to others. Additional scales assessed levels of trust, beliefs about human nature (e.g., altruism), and love styles. The results of the Collins and Read (1990) study

indicated that participants who felt comfortable with closeness and felt safe to depend upon others, consistent with qualities of secure attachment, had a high sense of self-worth, reported experiencing social confidence, and were comfortable with emotional expression. Their beliefs about the social world were also positive, as they viewed other people as trustworthy, dependable, altruistic, and willing to stand up for their beliefs. Secure people were also less likely to have a love style characterized by game playing and obsessiveness. Participants with high levels of the anxious attachment style had a low sense of self-worth and social self-confidence, and reported low levels of assertiveness. They were also more likely to have an obsessive or dependent love style than individuals with high levels of secure attachment. Participants with high levels of the anxious attachment style reported negative experiences with the social world, and they viewed other people as being less altruistic, more complex, and difficult to understand. Additionally, Collins and Read (1990) found that women who recalled that their fathers had been warm and responsive to them during their childhood were more likely to date men who felt that they could depend on others and were comfortable getting close with their partners. Men who recalled that their mother was cold or inconsistent with them during their childhood were more likely to be dating women who had an anxious attachment style. For both men and women, the attachment style of opposite-sex parent was found to be predictive of the attachment style dimensions of their partners.

Simpson, Rholes, and Nelligan (1992) found that women who reported higher levels of the secure attachment style tended to regulate their emotions partially by turning to their dating partners for reassurance and support when they were upset, whereas women who reported a higher level of the avoidant attachment style (the researchers used Hazan and Shaver's three-category model) tended to withdraw from their partners when upset. Interestingly, men with higher levels of secure attachment tended to give their

partners greater emotional support and reassurance when their partners were distressed, and avoidantly attached men tended to become less supportive. Other research studies have replicated findings that suggest that people with different adult attachment styles tend to regulate, control, and mitigate negative affect in these ways (Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Feeney, 1995; Kobak, Cole, Ferenz-Gillies, Fleming, & Gamble, 1993; Mikulincer, Florian & Tolmacz; Simpson, Rholes, & Philips, 1996).

Brennan and Shaver (1995) conducted a study designed to assess affect regulation and other behavioral correlates of the three attachment styles. They were particularly interested in studying the relationship of attachment styles and three specific methods of affect regulation used by adults: fantasizing about engaging in non-intimate sex with casual partners (which they proposed may function to maintain emotional distance from partners), the use of alcohol to quell anxiety, and the use of food as a coping strategy in response to anxiety. They selected 242 students from a much larger pool of participants who had already been assessed for attachment style to insure that exactly 33% of the final sample fit into one of the three attachment categories. Half of the participants were male and half were female. The participants ranged in age from 15 to 47 years, with an average age of 19 years. Regardless of age or gender, participants with high levels of the secure attachment style were found to employ healthier methods of affect regulation than the people with high levels of the avoidant or anxious attachment styles. Securely attached participants were significantly less likely to use alcohol, sex, or food as a method of affect regulation. Participants with an avoidant attachment style expressed greater self-reliance and low levels of proximity seeking compared with securely or anxiously attached participants. Both insecure groups, and especially the avoidant group, were found to trust less compared with members of the secure group. Brennan and Shaver noted that participants with an avoidant attachment style seemed to smother the desire for

emotional connection by distracting themselves through work, avoiding focus on feelings, avoiding self-disclosure, consuming larger quantities of alcohol and consuming it with greater frequency. Further, some of the participants with an avoidant attachment style may have been distancing themselves emotional dependency and commitment in romantic relationships by frequently fantasizing about sex with someone other than their partner, engaging in brief sexual encounters and affairs, viewing the end of a relationship as inconsequential, and choosing not to seek comfort from their partners in times of stress. Participants with an anxious attachment style reported a greater preoccupation with attachment needs and potential losses in relationships than did securely or avoidantly attached participants. They readily expressed their fears and anger, but often felt unappreciated or unheard by romantic partners. Participants with an anxious attachment style were found to be more clingy than participants who endorsed the secure or avoidant attachment styles. They were more likely to drink to reduce anxiety than either of the other attachment styles, and were more likely to binge eat under stress. Further, they tended to fall in love at first sight and subsequently exhibit more jealousy and overdependency on their partners than did secure or avoidantly attached participants (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

Guerrero (1996) conducted a study designed to explore the differences in the verbal and nonverbal communication of intimacy and affection among people with different attachment styles. Participants in this study included 80 college student couples, with ages ranging from 18 to 39, with a mean age of 22.3 years. The researchers videotaped couples interacting, and measured three specific indicators of communication and intimacy, including their facial and vocal pleasantness, attentiveness to their partner, and gazes toward their partner. The findings suggested a number of significant attachment style differences in relational and nonverbal communication. Those who were classified

with higher levels of fearful and dismissive attachment styles tended to convey less trust and receptivity, facial pleasantness, vocal pleasantness, interest, and attentiveness than those individuals who had higher levels of secure and preoccupied attachment. The participants with fearful attachment styles tended to sit farthest from their partners and displayed the least verbal fluency and longest response latencies. People who were classified with a secure or preoccupied attachment style tended to engage in more in-depth conversation than those who endorsed a dismissive or fearful attachment style (Guerrero, 1996).

For a study conceived by Tucker and Anders (1998), 61 heterosexual couples ranging in age from 17 to 26 years, with a mean age of 19.3 years, completed Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment measure and were videotaped while they discussed the positive aspects of their relationship. Both partners' nonverbal behaviors were observed for specific nonverbal cues and qualities that the researchers believed would be theoretically associated with specific attachment styles. Results suggested that the secure attachment style was associated with more nonverbal closeness. The securely attached participants were more likely to laugh, touch their partners, gaze lovingly at their partner, and they smiled more often during the study than participants with high levels of other attachment styles. Participants with a secure attachment style were also more likely to hold an open posture when interacting with their partner, and seemed to be experiencing more enjoyment in the experience without the researchers' awareness of any underlying tension. Participants with a higher level of the avoidant attachment style were generally found to exhibit less nonverbal closeness. They touched their their partners less, gazed less, and smiled less than did individuals who endorsed either the secure or anxious attachment style. Avoidantly attached participants seemed to be less nonverbally expressive overall, and did not seem to enjoy their experience with their partner.

Fishtein, Pietromonaco, and Barrett (1999) were interested in exploring the correlations attachment styles and conflict avoidance strategies. The participants included 145 undergraduate students, 58% of whom fit a secure attachment style, 14% preoccupied, 20% fearful, and 8% dismissing, based on Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) four category model of attachment. Participants had been involved in their current intimate relationship for an average of 18 months. The results indicated that participants with preoccupied a attachment style differ from individuals with other attachment styles in the way in which they organize knowledge about conflictual romantic relationships. The preoccupied participants viewed conflict more favorably than did participants who endorsed any of the other styles. The researchers proposed that preoccupied individuals may have less aversive feelings toward conflict because conflict affords them an opportunity to pursue greater intimacy and responsiveness from their partner. Given their goal to achieve intimacy and responsiveness from their partners, Fishtein et al. (1999) suggested that people with a preoccupied attachment style may interpret conflict as evidence that they can become closer to their partner.

Attachment styles and relationship adjustment

Keelan, Dion, and Dion (1994) conducted a longitudinal study that examined the role of attachment styles and relationship quality over time. The results suggested that participants with a secure attachment style obtained and maintained high levels of relationship satisfaction, commitment, and trust over a four month period. By contrast, participants with an insecure attachment style tended to identify decreased levels of relationship satisfaction, commitment, and trust, over the same period. Securely attached individuals who ended their relationships within the four month period rated the even *terminated* relationship as positively as secure individuals who remained in intact relationships. The findings suggested that secure individuals were more likely to view

both their relationships and partners, even past ones, in a more favorable light than people who had an insecure attachment style did of their current partners.

Keelan, Dion, and Dion (1998) conducted a later study that examined the relationships among of attachment styles, self-disclosure and relationship satisfaction. The participants in the study were 99 undergraduate students, ranging in age from 17 to 36 years, with a mean age of 20 years. The researchers used Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) four-category attachment measure and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) three-category attachment measure, a self-disclosure index, and a relationship satisfaction scale. They found that people with high levels of the secure attachment style were more likely to self-disclose to their partners than those participants with higher levels of fearful, preoccupied, or dismissing attachment styles, and reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction than other attachment styles. They noted that many participants with a preoccupied attachment style also reported experiencing significant levels of relationship satisfaction, though not to the level of those who were securely attached. Individuals with fearful and dismissing attachment styles reported the least amount of relationship satisfaction.

Tucker and Anders (1999) investigated the associations between adult attachment styles, interpersonal perception accuracy, and relationship satisfaction in dating couples. the participants consisted of 61 undergraduate students and their heterosexual dating partners who had to have been in a committed relationship for at least one month. The age of the participants ranged from 17-27 years. The participants were asked to complete questionnaires about love, commitment, and trust, both from their point of view and from the point of view of their partners, to test interpersonal perception accuracy. Results indicated that men who reported higher levels of anxious and avoidant attachment, and women who reported high levels of anxious attachment, also reported lower relationship

satisfaction. The researchers suggested that the lower satisfaction among anxiously attached men might be partially explained by their lower accuracy in perceiving their partner's feelings of love.

Negative self-schemas

As children interact with their parents and other significant socializing figures, they develop beliefs about themselves in relation to the world around them. These core beliefs have been labeled “schemas” (Beck, 1964). Schemas have been a focus in the mental health literature for decades (Bartlett, 1932). Segal (1988) defined the schema as a cognitive structure that organizes past experiences and guides the subsequent evaluation and interpretation of information for future experiences. Schemas have been described as cognitive structures that are stable and enduring through time. They form the core of one's self concept and are used by individuals as a template for interpreting the world around them (Beck, 1967; Segal, 1988). Self-schemas, as defined by Jeffrey Young (1993), are beliefs and feelings about oneself that develop during childhood and are elaborated throughout one's lifespan. They are self-perpetuating and are very resistant to change. Self-schemas often operate without our awareness as we interpret our thoughts, feelings, and experiences through them. When a schema “erupts”, or is triggered by events that elicit a powerful thought or memory, our thoughts and feelings are subsequently dominated by these schemas. It is at these moments that people may experience extreme negative emotions and have dysfunctional thoughts, should their powerful reaction be painful in nature (Young, 1993).

Young (1994) defines “early maladaptive schemas” as broad, pervasive life themes regarding oneself and others that developed as a result of unpleasant experiences in childhood. As people grow older, the early maladaptive schemas may become more entrenched and maladaptive. These “negative self-schemas,” as they are labeled in adults,

may constitute the primary cognitive and emotional obstacles to the creation and maintenance of satisfying relationships and interactions with others. According to Young, negative self-schemas have several defining characteristics: they are accepted as truths about oneself and others, regardless of objective evidence to the contrary; they are self-perpetuating, rigidly held, and difficult to change; they are dysfunctional, either to oneself or others; they are often triggered by environmental events; they are associated with high degrees of negative affect when they erupt; and they may often block an individual from meeting one or more of their core needs (e.g., security, close connection with another, open expressiveness).

Young (1999) has identified and defined fifteen specific negative self-schemas in his work with clients that are particularly relevant to adult romantic relationships. They are grouped into five schema domains that correspond with significant, overarching needs that may have gone unmet during, or since, childhood. The first domain is “Disconnection and Rejection”, which is characterized by an expectation that one’s primary needs will not be met in a predictable manner by others. Abandonment/Instability is belief that others are unreliable for emotional support and connection and may eventually abandon them in favor of someone else. Mistrust/Abuse is the belief that others will intentionally harm them in some way. Emotional Deprivation is the belief that one’s emotional needs will not be met by others. Defectiveness/Shame is characterized by the belief that one is internally flawed, inadequate, or unlovable. Finally, Social Isolation/Alienation is the belief that one is different from others and isolated from any group.

The second domain proposed by Young (1999) is “Impaired Autonomy and Performance”, which refers to expectations one has about oneself and the world that interfere with one’s perceived ability to individuate, survive, and function independently and successfully. Dependence/ Incompetence is the belief that one is incompetent in

functioning independently in everyday life. Vulnerability to Harm or Illness is the belief that an upcoming emotional or medical catastrophic event is inevitable. Enmeshment/Undeveloped Self is characterized by the belief that one is lacking in individual identity or inner direction. Finally, Failure is characterized by the belief that one is inadequate relative to others in areas of achievement.

The third domain is called “Impaired Limits”, which refers to a deficiency in internal limits and responsibility to others, as well as long-term goal orientation. Entitlement/Grandiosity is the belief that one is superior to others, and should therefore be entitled to special privileges. Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline is the unwillingness or difficulty in restraining the excessive expression of one’s emotions. Individuals who endorse this negative self-schema may find it difficult to tolerate any frustration in reaching their goals.

The fourth domain proposed by Young (1999), “Other Directedness”, refers to an excessive focus on the needs and responses of others at the expense of one’s own needs. This focus on others is typically made to gain love or approval from their partners. Subjugation is the tendency to surrender control to others because one feels coerced, usually to avoid anger, retaliation, or abandonment. Finally, Self-Sacrifice is characterized by the excessive voluntary sacrifice of one’s own needs in order to secure connection with others.

The fifth and final domain, “Overvigilance and Inhibition”, refers to an excessive emphasis on suppressing one’s spontaneous feelings and impulses or meeting rigid, internalized rules and expectations at the expense of happiness, self-expression, relaxation, close relationships, or health. Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness is the belief that one must constantly strive to meet very high internalized standards of behavior and achievement or face criticism. Emotional Inhibition is the belief that emotions and

impulses must be inhibited, or negative consequences such as disapproval by others, feelings of shame, or loss of control will result.

Negative Self-Schemas and Relationship Adjustment

No known research had been conducted prior to this study to explore the relationships between Young's (1994) theoretical conceptualization of negative self-schemas and relationship satisfaction. Young and Gluhoski (1998) proposed a schema-focused model of relationship satisfaction which suggested that relationship satisfaction occurs only when core needs are fulfilled in relationships. They speculated that the presence of any of the maladaptive negative self-schemas may prevent core needs from being met in intimate relationships. They proposed that negative self-schemas may lead to dysfunctional partner selections, overreactions to events occurring in the relationship, and maladaptive coping styles which may lead, in turn, to relationship dissatisfaction. The absence of negative self-schemas, in turn, should predict healthier, more satisfying relationships. One of the primary goals of this study was to confirm Young and Gluhoski's theory that negative self-schemas are predictive of relationship dissatisfaction.

Negative Self-Schemas and Adult Attachment Styles

Both attachment and schema theories are grounded in the notion that whether or not the basic needs of acceptance, protection, unconditional love, and a stable sense of security are met *significantly* influences how people think about (negative self-schemas) and behave in (attachment styles) partnered relationships (Bowlby, 1973; Koski & Shaver, 1997; Young & Gluhoski, 1998). Perhaps those people who are securely attached and experience little disruption from negative self-schemas may have had their core needs met in their current or previous relationships. Likewise, people who experience insecure attachments and report higher levels of negative self-schemas may not have had their core needs met in relationships with significant others. It seems clear that exploring the

relationships between attachment styles, negative self-schemas, and relationship satisfaction would contribute valuable information to the understanding of healthy and successful relationships.

In summary, childhood experiences with significant caregivers are believed to have a profound influence on future relationships. During infancy, humans form enduring beliefs about themselves and others in their environment, called self-schemas. They simultaneously develop unique attachment behaviors, or “attachment styles,” which correspond to the level of security, anxiety, or avoidance they feel around their caregivers. Researchers who study self-schemas and attachment styles contend that what people experience and learn from their relationships as children endures into adulthood, thereby coloring their experience in adult romantic relationships. While the effects of adult attachment on relationship adjustment have been studied previously, little is known about the relationship among negative self-schemas and partner attachment styles, or the relationship among negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment. Exploring these relationships may provide new insight for mental health professionals who are working to help people improve the quality of their relationships.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in the study included 140 adults who had been in a partnered, romantic relationship for at least 6 months. The participants were recruited from two churches in Northeastern Oklahoma, one rural and one suburban, and a Tulsa-based investment club. Of the 140 packets that were collected, 3 were missing significant amounts of data. These packets were omitted from the analysis of the data. The mean age of the 137 remaining individuals was 47.2 ($SD = 15.15$) years of age, with a range of 22 to 87 years of age. Approximately 57% of the participants were female ($n = 78$) and 43% were male. Most participants identified themselves as Caucasian (83.9%, $n = 115$), 4.4% ($n = 6$) identified as African-American, 4.4% ($n = 6$) identified as Native American/American Indian, 3.6% ($n = 5$) identified as Asian/Asian-American, 1.5% ($n = 2$) identified as Hispanic/Latino/Latina, and 2.2% ($n = 3$) identified as Other.

In terms of relationship status, 86.9% ($n = 119$) identified themselves as Married, 10.9% ($n = 15$) identified themselves as Living with Partner, 1.5% ($n = 2$) identified themselves as Partnered, Not Living Together, and 0.7% ($n = 1$) identified themselves as Separated. The majority of the participants (92.7%, $n = 127$) identified themselves as heterosexual, 6.6% ($n = 9$) identified themselves as gay/lesbian, and .7% ($n = 1$) identified themselves as bisexual. Relationship length ranged markedly from 12 months (1 year) to 758 months (63.1 years), with the mean relationship length being 244 months ($SD = 201.33$), or 20.1 years. Approximately 55.5% ($n = 76$) of the participants

indicated that they do not have any children currently living in the home with them. Additionally, 20.4% ($n = 28$) of the participants reported that they have one child in the home, 17.5% ($n = 24$) indicated they have two children in the home, 5.1% ($n = 7$) indicated that they have three children in the home, 0.7% ($n = 1$) reported that they have four children in the home, and 0.7% ($n = 1$) reported that they have seven children currently living in the home.

In terms of participants' highest level of education, 30.7% ($n = 42$) of the respondents reported that they had achieved an undergraduate degree, 25.5% ($n = 35$) indicated that they had achieved a graduate degree, 21.2% ($n = 29$) reported that they had attended some college, 10.9% ($n = 15$) reported that they had a high school or GED diploma, 8.8% ($n = 12$) reported that they had some graduate training, 1.5% ($n = 2$) reported that they had voc-tech training, and 1.5% ($n = 2$) reported that they had less than a high school diploma. Further, the average income range for the participants' families was between \$60,000 and \$70,000 a year. However, the most frequent income bracket reported by the the participants was the \$90,001/year or more category (32.1%, $n = 44$).

Measures

Instruments used in this study included an informed consent form, a demographic form, the Relationships Questionnaire (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), the Young Schema Questionnaire - Short Form (Young, 1998), and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1989).

Relationships Questionnaire The Relationships Questionnaire (RQ) is the most widely used tool among researchers to continuously measure adults' level of attachment across the four attachment styles. Several studies have found high validity and reliability ratings for the instrument (e.g., Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Brennan et al., 1998).

The RQ is comprised of four short paragraphs which are descriptive of the four attachment styles (secure, fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing) identified by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). Individuals rank how closely each of the four paragraphs (or styles) matches the way they feel in their romantic relationships by ranking them on a 7-point Likert-type scale. A response of “1” indicates that the description presented in the paragraph is not at all like them. A response of “4” indicates that the description is neutral to them. A response of “7” indicates that the description is very much like them.

The first item of the Relationships Questionnaire (RQ) measures the level of “secure” attachment the individual identifies in their romantic relationships. The item reads “It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don’t worry about being alone or having others not accept me.” The second item measures the level of “fearful” attachment the individual identifies in their romantic relationships. The item reads “I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.” The third item measures the level of “preoccupied” attachment the individual identifies in their romantic relationships. The item reads “I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don’t value me as much as I value them.” The fourth and final item measures the level of “dismissing” attachment the individual identifies in their romantic relationships. The item reads “I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.”

Young Schema Questionnaire - Second Edition, Short Form (YSQ-2) (Young, 1998). The YSQ - 2 Short Form is a 75-item instrument developed by Jeffrey Young (1998) to assess individuals' endorsement of 15 of the 18 identified negative self-schemas (the three negative self-schemas not measured by the YSQ-2 are not relevant to the current study). Participants responded to each of the 75 items (five items per negative self-schema) of the YSQ-2 using a 6-point Likert-type scale. A response of "1" indicates that the item is completely untrue of the individual. A response of "6" indicates that the item describes them perfectly. There are five items that measure each negative self-schema. Negative self-schema subscales are computed by summing the responses to the 5 items in each schema subscale on the questionnaire.

The negative self-schemas that were measured using the YSQ - 2 are listed here, followed by an example of an item from each schema subscale. Abandonment/Instability: "I find myself clinging to people I'm close to because I'm afraid they'll leave me." Mistrust/Abuse: "I feel that people will take advantage of me." Emotional Deprivation: "Most of the time, I haven't had someone to nurture me, share him/herself with me, or care deeply about everything that happens to me." Defectiveness/Shame: "No man/woman I desire could love me once he/she saw my defects." Social Isolation/Alienation: "I don't fit in." Dependence/Incompetence: "I do not feel capable of getting by on my own in everyday life." Vulnerability to Harm or Illness: "I can't seem to escape the feeling that something bad is about to happen." Enmeshment/Undeveloped Self: "I have not been able to separate myself from my parent(s) the way other people my age seem to." Failure: "Almost nothing I do is as good as other people can do." Entitlement/Grandiosity: "I have a lot of trouble accepting 'no' for an answer when I want something from other people." Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline: "I can't seem to discipline myself to complete routine or boring tasks." Subjugation: "I feel that I

have no choice but to give in to other people's wishes, or else they will retaliate or reject me in some way." Self-Sacrifice: "I'm the one who usually ends up taking care of people I'm close to". Emotional Inhibition: "I am too self-conscious to show positive feelings to others (e.g., affection, showing I care)." Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness: "I must be the best; I can't settle for 'good enough.'"

The first negative self-schema domain, "Disconnection and Rejection" consists of the negative self-schema subscales Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, and Defectiveness/Shame. The second domain "Impaired Autonomy and Performance" consists of the subscales Failure, Dependence/Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, and Enmeshment. The third domain "Other-Directedness" includes the subscales Subjugation and Self-Sacrifice. The fourth domain "Overvigilance and Inhibition" is comprised of the subscales Emotional Inhibition and Unrelenting Standards. Finally, the fifth domain "Impaired Limits" consists of the subscales Entitlement and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline.

For the long-form test reliability coefficients range from .50 to .82. Chronbach alphas for the long-form of the YSQ range from .86 to .96 (Schmidt, Joiner, Young, & Telch, 1995). The short form of the YSQ (YSQ-2) includes the top 5 item loadings for each self-schema factor from the long form. The psychometric properties of the YSQ short form are confirmed to be comparable to the long form, though they have not been published at this time (Young, 2000, personal communication). Studies are currently in the process of being published demonstrating the psychometric properties of the YSQ-2.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale Developed by Spanier (1989), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) has become one of the most widely used instruments to measure relationship adjustment. Over 1,000 scientific studies have used the instrument to date

(Spanier, 2001). Psychometrically, the DAS has been determined to be one of the best indicators of relationship adjustment and satisfaction (Cohen, 1985). This measure can be given to one or both members of a partnered couple to assess relationship adjustment.

The DAS is a 32-item questionnaire that measures four aspects of relationship adjustment: a) dyadic consensus, b) dyadic satisfaction, c) dyadic cohesion, and d) affectional expression. A total adjustment score is calculated by summing the scores for the four subscales. The Dyadic Consensus subscale measures the extent of agreement between partners on matters important to the relationship such as money, religion, recreation, friends, and time spent together. The Dyadic Satisfaction subscale measures the amount of tension in the relationship, as well as the extent to which the individual has considered ending the relationship. The Affectional Expression subscale measures the individual's satisfaction with the expression of affection and sex in the relationship. Finally, the Dyadic Cohesion subscale assesses the common interests and activities shared by the couple (Spanier, 1989). Higher scores on these subscales indicate positive adjustment in these domains. For the purposes of this study, the total score of the DAS was used to assess relationship adjustment.

The way in which the items are rated varies throughout the DAS. For instance, items 1-15 are short phrases that the participant is asked to read and then indicate their level of agreement between their partners on different topics (e.g., "demonstrations of affection," "handling family finances") on a Likert-type scale. A response of "0" indicates that they always with their partner. A response of "5" indicates that they always agree on the topic. Items 16-22 are questions to determine the frequency of specific occurrences in the relationship (e.g., "How often do you and your partner quarrel"?, "Do you confide in your mate"?). Participants use a 5-point Likert scale to rate these items. A response of "0" indicates that it occurs all of the time. A response of "5" indicates that it never

occurs. Still other questions require a “yes” or “no” response (e.g. “being too tired for sex” in the past few weeks), or another Likert-scale with different descriptors. Each break in the questioning style is preceded by a brief set of instructions noting the change and advising the participant on filling out the next items. The items comprising each of the four subscales are randomly scattered throughout the DAS. The specific item response each DAS subscale are summed to arrive at a subscale score. The total adjustment score is the sum of all four DAS subscales.

Numerous studies have tested the psychometric properties of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Johnson & Greenberg, 1985; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986; Filsinger & Willson, 1983). Internal consistency has generally been measured using Cronbach’s coefficient alpha. Spanier (1976) reported a Total Adjustment scale internal consistency reliability of .96. Other investigators have reported comparable values for both male and female respondents. Subscale internal consistency reliabilities range from .73 to .92 for Dyadic Consensus. The values of coefficient alpha range from .77 to .94 for Dyadic Satisfaction. The internal consistency coefficients for Affectional Expression are somewhat lower, ranging from .58 to .73. Internal consistency reliabilities for Dyadic Cohesion range from .72 to .86. The Total Adjustment scale reliabilities range from .84 to .96. Content validity, criterion-related validity, concurrent and predictive validity, test-retest reliabilities, and group differences have been strongly supported in the literature assessing the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Callan, 1984; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986; Yelsma, 1986).

Procedure

The principal investigator met with the pastors of two churches in Northeastern Oklahoma and the president of a Tulsa-based investment club to assess their interest in this project. The pastors and investment club leader explained to people attending their

church services/meetings the purpose of the study and the requirements necessary to participate should they wish to do so. Copies of the packets used in this study were placed at the exits after the meetings and those individuals interested picked up a copy for themselves and anyone else whom they believed might be interested in filling out the questionnaire. Each questionnaire was placed in an envelope containing a letter explaining the study and the necessary requirements of the individual who fills out the questionnaires, an informed consent form to be read and kept by the participant (returning the completed questionnaire would imply consent), a resource list, the research packet including the demographic sheet and the questionnaires, and a stamped business reply envelope for them to return the completed questionnaires to the primary investigator. In an effort to maintain confidentiality and privacy, the participants were not asked to write their names or any identifying information on any forms. People who did not wish to participate were not penalized in any way. If they decided not to complete the survey, they simply did not pick up a packet or declined to send it back completed.

Participants completed a packet that included a demographic sheet, the Relationships Questionnaire, the Young Schema Questionnaire - Short Form, and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale at their leisure at home. They then returned the packet in the envelope provided to them. The questionnaires were counterbalanced to control for order effects. The amount of time required for the completion of the packet was estimated to be approximately 30-40 minutes. A resource list of counseling services in the local communities was provided to all participants in the event that they would like to seek counseling services. A summary of the results of this study will be provided to the pastors of the churches and the president of the investment club.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to explore 1) the relationship of partner attachment styles and relationship adjustment in partnered individuals, 2) the relationship of negative self-schemas with relationship adjustment in partnered individuals, and 3) the relationship of negative self-schemas and adult attachment styles. Pearson correlations were conducted to determine the relationships among the variables. See Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 for the correlation matrices of these variables. Forward regression analyses were used to identify significant predictors of the criterion variables. For research question one, a forward regression analysis was conducted with the four attachment styles were the predictor variables and the total adjustment score was the criterion variable. For research question two, a series of forward regression analyses were conducted with the negative self-schemas in each of the five domains as the predictor variables, and the total adjustment score was the criterion variable. For research question three, a series of forward regression analyses were conducted with each of the negative self-schemas from each of the five domains as the predictor variables, and the partner attachment styles were the criterion variables. Due to the large numbers of regression analyses, Bonferoni corrections were used to control alpha at the family level.

Research Question One: *What was the relationship of attachment styles and relationship adjustment? Which of the four attachment styles were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment?* Pearson correlation analyses were conducted between each attachment style and the Total Adjustment score of the DAS. In the regression analysis

for this question, all four attachment styles were considered one family and were entered as the predictor variable, and the Total Adjustment score was the criterion variable. The four attachment styles were considered one family, so alpha was set at .05 for the following analysis.

Three of the four attachment styles were significantly correlated with the Total Adjustment score. The Secure attachment style was found to have a significant positive correlation with Total Adjustment ($r = .36, p < .001$). The Fearful ($r = -.30, p < .001$) and Dismissing ($r = -.20, p < .05$) attachment styles were found to have significant negative correlations with Total Adjustment. The Preoccupied attachment style was not significantly correlated with relationship adjustment ($r = .07$). Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Secure attachment was the only variable that entered significantly into equation, $F(1,135) = 20.43, p < .01$, accounting for 13.1% of the variance in Total Adjustment scores. The Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing attachment styles did not enter the equation. See Table 5 for a summary of the forward regression statistics. All of the hypotheses were supported, except for the expected relationship between relationship adjustment and the Preoccupied attachment style.

Research Question Two: *What was the relationship of the negative self-schemas from each of the five domains and relationship adjustment? Which of the negative self-schemas from each domain were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment?* Each of the five negative self-schema domains (predictors) was considered a family, therefore, the level of alpha was set at .01 (.05/5).

2a) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Disconnection and Rejection domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?*

All five negative self-schemas within the Disconnection and Rejection domain,

Emotional Deprivation ($r = -.49, p < .001$), Abandonment/Instability ($r = -.46, p < .001$), Mistrust/Abuse ($r = -.46, p < .001$), Social Isolation ($r = -.38, p < .001$), and Defectiveness/Shame ($r = -.23, p < .01$), were found to have a significant negative correlation with relationship adjustment. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Emotional Deprivation and Abandonment/Instability were the two variables that entered significantly into the equation, $F(2,134) = 31.72, p < .001$, accounting for a total of 32.1% of the variance in the Total Adjustment scores. Emotional Deprivation entered the equation first, uniquely accounting for 23.6% of the variance. Abandonment entered the equation second, accounting for an additional 8.6% of the variance in the Total Adjustment scores. The Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, and Defectiveness/Shame negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 6 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

2b) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?*

One of the negative self-schemas from this domain, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness ($r = -.34, p < .001$), was found to have a significant negative correlation with Total Adjustment score. The other negative self-schemas from this domain, Failure ($r = -.19$), Dependence/ Incompetence ($r = -.02$), and Enmeshment ($r = -.08$), did not correlate significantly with relationship adjustment. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Vulnerability to Harm and Illness was the only variable that entered significantly into the equation, $F(1,135) = 17.41, p < .001$, accounting for 11.4% of the variance in the Total Adjustment score. The Failure, Dependence/ Incompetence, and Enmeshment negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 7 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

2c) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?*

Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline ($r = -.31$, $p < .001$) was the one negative self-schema from this domain that was found to have a significant negative correlation with Total Adjustment scores. The other negative self-schema, Entitlement ($r = -.13$), was not found to be significantly correlated with Total Adjustment scores. Results of the forward regression analyses indicated that Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline was the only variable that entered significantly into the equation, $F(1,135) = 14.39$, $p < .001$, accounting for 9.6% of the variance in Total Adjustment scores. The Entitlement negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 8 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

2d) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Other-Directedness domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?*

From the Other-Directedness domain, only Subjugation ($r = -.33$, $p < .001$) was found to have a significant negative correlation with Total Adjustment scores. The other negative self-schema from this domain, Self-Sacrifice ($r = -.10$), was not significantly correlated with the Total Adjustment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Subjugation was the only variable that entered significantly into the equation, $F(1,135) = 16.82$, $p < .001$, accounting for 11.1% of the variance in Total Adjustment scores. The Self-Sacrifice negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 9 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

2e) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain and relationship adjustment? What were the most significant*

predictors of relationship adjustment from this domain?

One negative self-schema from this domain, Emotional Inhibition ($r = -.36$, $p < .001$), was found to have a significant negative correlation with Total Adjustment scores. The other negative self-schema from this domain, Unrelenting Standards ($r = -.21$), was not found to have a significant correlation with Total Adjustment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Emotional Inhibition was the only variable that entered significantly into the equation, $F(1,135) = 19.78$, $p < .001$, accounting for 12.8% of the variance in Total Adjustment scores. The Unrelenting Standards negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 10 for a summary of the regression statistics.

Research Question Three: *What was the relationship of the negative self-schemas from each of the five domains and attachment styles? Which of the negative self-schemas from each domain were the most significant predictors of attachment styles?* Each negative self-schema domain was considered a family. Therefore, the level of alpha was set at .01 (.05/5) for the following analyses.

3a) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Secure attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Secure attachment style from each domain?*

There were significant negative correlations between each of the negative self-schemas within the Disconnection and Rejection domain, Mistrust/Abuse ($r = -.45$, $p < .001$), Social Isolation/Alienation ($r = -.44$, $p < .001$), and Emotional Deprivation ($r = -.43$, $p < .001$), Defectiveness/Shame ($r = -.40$, $p < .001$) and Abandonment ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$) and the Secure attachment style. Results of a forward regression analysis suggested that Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation, and Emotional Deprivation were the three negative self-schemas from this domain that together entered significantly into the

equation, $F(3,133) = 17.32, p < .01$, accounting for a total of 28.1% of the variance in the Secure attachment scores. Mistrust/Abuse entered the equation first and uniquely accounted for 20.1% of the variance in Secure attachment scores. Social Isolation accounted for an additional 4.6% of the variance and Emotional Deprivation accounted for an additional 3.4% of the variance. The Abandonment/Instability and Defectiveness/Shame negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 11 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

From the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain, there were significant negative correlations between two of the negative self-schemas, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness ($r = -.28, p < .01$) and Failure ($r = -.27, p < .01$) and the level of Secure attachment scores. The negative self-schemas Dependence/Incompetence ($r = -.13$) and Enmeshment ($r = .01$) were not significantly correlated with the Secure attachment style. Results from the forward regression analysis indicated that Vulnerability to Harm and Illness was the only variable from this domain that significantly entered the equation, $F(1,135) = 11.52, p < .01$, accounting for 7.9% of the variance in Secure attachment scores. The Failure, Dependence/Incompetence, and Enmeshment negative self-schemas did not significantly enter the equation. See Table 12 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

There were no significant correlations between the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Limits domain, Entitlement ($r = -.15$) and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline ($r = -.16$), with the level of Secure attachment scores. Results from the forward regression analysis indicated that neither of the negative self-schemas from this domain, Entitlement and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline, entered significantly into the equation and contributed no significant percentage to the variance in Secure attachment scores.

There was a significant negative correlation between the Subjugation negative self-

schema ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$) from the Other-Directedness domain and the Secure attachment style. The Self-Sacrifice negative self-schema ($r = .10$) from this domain was not significantly correlated with the Secure attachment style. Results from the forward regression analysis suggested that both Subjugation and Self-Sacrifice entered significantly into the equation, $F(2,134) = 7.14$, $p < .01$, accounting for a total of 9.6% of the variance in Secure attachment scores. Subjugation entered the equation first, uniquely accounting for 6% of the variance. Self-sacrifice entered the equation second accounting for an additional 3.6% of the variance in Secure attachment scores. See Table 13 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

From the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain, the Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema ($r = -.59$, $p < .001$) was negatively correlated with the level of Secure attachment scores. The Unrelenting Standards negative self-schema ($r = -.15$) was not significantly correlated with the Secure attachment style. Results from the forward regression analysis suggested that Emotional Inhibition was the only variable to significantly enter the equation, $F(1,135) = 70.23$, $p < .001$, accounting for 34.2% of the variance in Secure attachment scores. The Unrelenting Standards negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 14 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

3b) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Preoccupied attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Fearful attachment style from each domain?*

A significant positive correlation was found between each of the negative self schemas in the Disconnection and Rejection domain, Emotional Deprivation ($r = .43$, $p < .001$), Mistrust/Abuse ($r = .40$, $p < .001$), Social Isolation/Alienation ($r = .40$, $p < .001$), Defectiveness/Shame ($r = .36$, $p < .001$), and Abandonment ($r = .25$, $p < .01$), and the Fearful attachment style. Results from the forward regression analysis suggested

that Emotional Deprivation and Social Isolation were the two variables that entered into the equation, $F(2,134) = 21.45, p < .001$, accounting for a total of 24.3% of the variance in Fearful attachment scores. Emotional Deprivation entered the equation first and uniquely accounted for 18.1% of the variation in Fearful attachment scores. Social Isolation accounted for an additional 6.2% of the variance in fearful attachment scores. The Mistrust/Abuse, Abandonment/Instability, and Defectiveness/Shame negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 15 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

From the Impaired Autonomy and Performance Domain, Failure ($r = .33, p < .001$) and Vulnerability to Harm and Illness ($r = .23, p < .01$) were found to have a significant positive correlation with the level of Fearful attachment scores. Dependence/Incompetence ($r = .11$) and Enmeshment ($r = .19$) were not significantly correlated. Results of the forward regression analysis suggested that Failure was the only variable that significantly entered into the equation, $F(1,135) = 16.55, p < .001$, accounting for 10.9% of the variance in Fearful attachment scores. The negative self-schemas Dependence/Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, and Enmeshment did not enter the equation. See Table 16 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

There was a significant positive correlation between one of the negative self-schemas within the Impaired Limits domain, Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline ($r = .22, p < .01$), and the Fearful attachment style. The Entitlement negative self-schema was not significantly correlated ($r = .17$). Results from the forward regression analysis indicated that Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline was the only variable that significantly entered into the equation, $F(1,135) = 7.15, p < .01$, accounting for 5% of the variance in Fearful attachment scores. The Entitlement negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 17 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

There was a significant correlation between one of the negative self-schemas from the Other-Directedness domain, Subjugation ($r = .36$, $p < .001$), and the Fearful attachment style. The Self-Sacrifice negative self-schema ($r = -.05$) was not significantly correlated with the level of the Fearful attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Subjugation and Self-Sacrifice together entered significantly into the equation, $F(2,134) = 12.59$, $p < .001$, accounting for a total of 15.8% of the variance in Fearful attachment scores. Subjugation entered the equation first, uniquely accounting for 12.8% of the variance. Self-Sacrifice entered the equation second accounting for an additional 3.1% of the variance in Fearful attachment scores. See Table 18 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

There was a significant positive correlation between one of the negative self-schemas from the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain, Emotional Inhibition ($r = .53$, $p < .001$), and the Fearful attachment style. The other negative self-schema from this domain, Unrelenting Standards ($r = .09$), was not significantly correlated with the Fearful attachment style. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Emotional Inhibition was the only variable to significantly enter the equation, $F(1,135) = 51.48$, $p < .01$, accounting for 27.6% of the variance in Fearful attachment scores. The Unrelenting Standards negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 19 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

3c) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Preoccupied attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Preoccupied attachment style from each domain?*

From the Disconnection and Rejection domain, one negative self-schema, Abandonment/Instability ($r = .29$, $p < .001$), was found to have a significant positive correlation with the level of Preoccupied attachment scores. There were no significant

correlations between the other negative self-schemas from this domain, Emotional Deprivation ($r = -.02$), Mistrust/Abuse ($r = .00$), Social Isolation ($r = .01$) and Defectiveness/Shame ($r = -.08$), and the Preoccupied attachment style. Results of the forward regression analyses indicated that Abandonment/Instability and Defectiveness/Shame were the two variables that together significantly entered the equation, $F(2,134) = 11.248$, $p < .001$, accounting for a total of 14.4% of the variance in Preoccupied attachment scores. Abandonment/Instability entered the equation first and uniquely accounted for 8.3% of the variance. Defectiveness/Shame entered the equation next and accounted for an additional 6% of the variance in Preoccupied attachment scores. The Mistrust/Abuse, Emotional Deprivation, and Social Isolation negative self-schemas did not significantly enter the equation. See Table 20 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

There was a significant positive correlation between one of the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain, Enmeshment ($r = .24$, $p < .01$), and the Preoccupied attachment style. The other three negative self-schemas from this domain, Failure ($r = .05$), Dependence/Incompetence ($r = .18$), and Vulnerability to Harm and Illness ($r = .03$), were not significantly correlated with the Preoccupied attachment style. Results indicated that Enmeshment was the only variable that significantly entered into the equation, $F(1,135) = 8.50$, $p < .001$, accounting for 5.9% of the variance in Preoccupied attachment scores. The Failure, Dependence/Incompetence, and Vulnerability to Harm and Illness negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 21 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

There were no significant correlations between the negative self-schemas in the Impaired Limits domain, Entitlement ($r = -.04$) and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline ($r = .19$), with the level of Preoccupied attachment scores. Results from the

forward regression analysis indicated that neither of the negative self-schemas from this domain, Entitlement and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline, entered significantly into the equation and contributed no significant percentage to the variance in Preoccupied attachment scores.

From the Other-Directedness domain, one negative self-schema, Subjugation ($r = .23$, $p < .01$), was found to have a significant positive correlation with the level of Preoccupied attachment style scores. The other negative self-schema from that domain, Self-Sacrifice ($r = .09$), was not significantly correlated with the level of Preoccupied attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Subjugation was the only variable that entered significantly into the equation, $F(1,135) = 7.30$, $p < .01$, accounting for 5.1% of the variance in Preoccupied attachment scores. The Self-Sacrifice negative self-schema did not enter the equation. See Table 22 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

No significant correlations were found between the negative self-schemas in the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain, Emotional Inhibition ($r = -.14$) and Unrelenting Standards ($r = .06$), with the level of Preoccupied attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that neither Emotional Inhibition nor Unrelenting Standards significantly entered into the equation, accounting for no significant variance in Preoccupied attachment scores.

3d) *What was the relationship of the negative self-schema scores in each domain and the Dismissing attachment style? What were the most significant predictors of the Dismissing attachment style from each domain?*

Three of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain, Emotional Deprivation ($r = .31$, $p < .001$), Mistrust/Abuse ($r = .28$, $p < .01$), and Social Isolation/Alienation ($r = .24$, $p < .01$), were positively correlated with the level of

Dismissing attachment scores. The Abandonment/Instability ($r = -.06$) and Defectiveness/Shame ($r = .12$) negative self-schemas were not significantly correlated with the level of Dismissing attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, and Social Isolation were the three variables that significantly entered the equation, $F(3,133) = 9.85, p < .001$, accounting for 18.2% of the variance in Dismissing attachment scores. Emotional Deprivation entered the equation first, uniquely accounting for 9.8% of the variance in Dismissing attachment scores. Abandonment/Instability added an additional 3.9% of the variance. Social Isolation accounted for an additional 4.5% of the variation in Dismissing attachment scores. The Mistrust/Abuse and Defectiveness/Shame negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 23 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

One of the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain, Failure ($r = .23, p < .01$), was found to have a significant positive correlation with the level of Dismissing attachment scores. The other negative self-schemas from this domain, Dependence/Incompetence ($r = .04$), Vulnerability to Harm and Illness ($r = .10$) and Enmeshment ($r = -.01$), were not significantly correlated with the level of Dismissing attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Failure was the only variable that significantly entered into the equation, $F(1,135) = 7.82, p < .01$, accounting for 5.5% of the variance in Dismissing attachment scores. The Dependence/Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, and Enmeshment negative self-schemas did not enter the equation. See Table 24 for a summary of the forward regression statistics.

Neither of the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Limits domain, Entitlement ($r = .19$) and Insufficient Self-Control Self-Discipline ($r = .08$), were

significantly correlated with the level of Dismissing attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that neither Entitlement or Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline significantly entered into the equation, accounting for no significant percentage of the variance in Dismissing attachment scores.

Neither of the negative self-schemas from the Other-Directedness domain, Subjugation ($r = .10$) and Self-Sacrifice ($r = -.18$), were significantly correlated with the level of Dismissing attachment scores. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that neither Self-Sacrifice or Subjugation significantly entered the equation, accounting for no significant percentage of the variance in Dismissing attachment scores.

One of the negative self-schemas from the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain, Emotional Inhibition ($r = .30$, $p < .001$), was significantly correlated with the level of the Dismissing attachment scores. The other negative self-schema from this domain, Unrelenting Standards ($r = .12$), was not significantly correlated with the Dismissing attachment style. Results of the forward regression analysis indicated that Emotional Inhibition was the only variable that significantly factored into the equation, $F(1,135) = 12.97$, $p < .001$, accounting for 8.8% of the variance in Dismissing attachment scores. The Unrelenting Standards negative self-schema did not enter into the equation. See Table 25 for a summary of the regression statistics

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results of this study will be discussed. The implications of these findings, the limitations of this study, and suggestions for further research will also be presented. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships among attachment styles and relationship adjustment, negative self-schemas and relationship adjustment, and negative self-schemas and attachment styles.

The relationships of attachment styles and relationship adjustment

The aim of the first research question was to explore the relationships of overall relationship adjustment levels with each of the four attachment styles in a non-student, adult population. It was hypothesized that the secure attachment style would be positively correlated with relationship adjustment. The levels of the three “insecure” attachment styles (fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing attachment) were expected to have a significant negative correlation with relationship adjustment. Further, it was hypothesized that the secure attachment style would be the most important predictor of overall relationship adjustment. Most of these hypotheses were confirmed by the study, except for the relationship between the preoccupied attachment style and relationship adjustment.

Secure attachment was positively correlated with relationship adjustment, which supported the hypothesis. This finding suggested that people who reported high levels of secure attachment in their relationships also reported high levels of relationship adjustment. This corroborates the results of previous research, indicating that people who

engage in relationships with a predominantly secure attachment style are typically at ease in their intimate relationships, report high levels of physical and emotional intimacy, and generally indicate high levels of adjustment in their romantic relationships (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991; Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994; Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992). People who feel secure in their attachments with others tend to communicate openly, feel comfortable with commitment, and they show active interest in their partner's needs and engage in similar activities (Collins & Read, 1990; Guerrero, 1996), all of which are traits that have been associated with high levels of relationship adjustment and overall life satisfaction (Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994; Spanier, 1989). The secure attachment style was also the only attachment style that significantly entered the regression equation, indicating that secure attachment was the most important predictor of relationship adjustment in this study.

Fearful and Dismissing attachment styles had significant negative correlations with relationship adjustment, which is also in support of the hypothesis. This finding suggested that people who reported high levels of either of the "avoidant" attachment styles, fearful or dismissing, also reported lower levels of overall relationship adjustment. This is uniform with the conclusions of earlier studies that have suggested that people who avoid intimacy, for whatever reason, tended to be less satisfied in their relationships. People who have a predominantly fearful attachment style have been described as feeling uncomfortable with emotional closeness, possibly out of fear that they will be hurt in a relationship if they allow themselves to be vulnerable (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). People with a fearful attachment style may be more hesitant to express their emotions, they may withdraw from partners in times of distress, and they may feel less committed in their relationships than people with a secure attachment style (Simpson, 1990; Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992). People who have a dismissing attachment style may

also avoid and be fearful of relationships. Their fear may be alleviated through a defensive denial of the need for an attachment figure. They may devalue the inherent value of intimate relationships and reject the idea of depending on anyone. They may not allow themselves to be caught up in the passion and intimacy of a relationship, and they may not express their emotions openly (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). According to Spanier (1989), levels of relationship adjustment are usually enhanced by people who show affection to their partner and allow themselves to receive it. People with a fearful or dismissing attachment style may be too afraid, or too indifferent, to allow themselves to be that vulnerable. As such, they may struggle in their relationships and report lower levels of relationship adjustment as a result.

Interestingly, and contrary to the hypothesis, the preoccupied attachment style was not significantly correlated with relationship adjustment. This result suggested the possibility that people with a preoccupied attachment style were generally neutral in their assessment of how well-adjusted they experience their relationships. Previous research has indicated similar findings. It has been suggested that people who have a high level of the preoccupied attachment style tend to experience conflicting feelings in their relationships (Bartholomew, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). For example, they may feel desperate for their partner's acceptance in order to feel whole, or they may feel that they must sacrifice their own needs to please their partners, which has the potential to foster resentment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), or they may have difficulty trusting their partners (Simpson, 1990). Further, they may report that they often feel misunderstood (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). Each of these qualities would seem to indicate a low level of relationship satisfaction and overall adjustment. However, people with a preoccupied attachment style also tend to express their emotions openly (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), and they may interpret conflict as a sign that the relationship is faring *well* because conflict

inherently involves deep involvement and attention of their partner, which to may be desirable to them even if it is unstable (Brennan and Shaver, 1995).

The results of the first segment of this study largely supported the findings of previous researchers. The older, non-student population did not produce markedly different results than studies conducted with students as the primary participants. This corroborates the postulates of attachment theorists who have suggested that people who have a secure attachment style tend to be the most satisfied and well-adjusted in their romantic relationships throughout the lifespan.

The relationships of negative self-schemas and total adjustment

The purpose of the second research question was to explore the relationships among each of the negative self-schemas and the level of overall relationship adjustment. It was hypothesized that all of the negative self-schemas, regardless of which domain they represented, would be negatively correlated with relationship adjustment. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from each domain would be the most important predictors of relationship adjustment. The hypotheses were only partially confirmed as most, but not all, of the negative self-schemas had significant negative correlations with relationship adjustment. The results indicated that nine of the 15 negative self- schemas had significant negative correlations with the level of relationship adjustment, which implied that people who have one or more of those nine negative self-schemas also reported a lower level of relationship adjustment. The remaining six negative self-schemas did not have significant correlations with relationship adjustment.

Each of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain (Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, and Defectiveness/Shame) was negatively correlated with the level of relationship adjustment. The strongest correlation was between the level of

Mistrust/Abuse and relationship adjustment. People who have the Mistrust/Abuse negative self-schema may have an expectation that others will intentionally hurt, abuse, lie to, or cheat them. These people may choose partners who are verbally or physically abusive. They may believe that they cannot trust their partners (Young & Gluhoski, 1998). People who fear that others will harm them intentionally may emotionally withdraw from their partners to protect themselves. They may never feel at ease in their relationships, they may never feel emotionally supported, and they may never develop a positive emotional connection with their partners. These conditions are known to be correlated with higher levels of relationship dissatisfaction and lower levels of overall relationship adjustment (Spanier, 1989).

People with the Social Isolation/Alienation negative self-schema may feel as though they are isolated from the rest of the world and are fundamentally different from other people (Young, 1994). Those who have this negative self-schema may feel inferior to others or unable to connect with their partners. It is conceivable that someone with this negative self-schema may feel that their partner can never understand who they are and what they are feeling, and so they do not confide in their partner. According to Spanier (1989), a high level of relationship adjustment requires that partners will feel able to confide in their partner and share similar interests. It makes sense that people who feel that they cannot connect with their partner in this way would not experience a satisfying level of relationship adjustment.

Those who have the Emotional Deprivation negative self-schema may believe that their need for nurturance, empathy, and protection will not be met by their partners in a reliable way (Young, 1994). Young and Gluhoski (1998) theorized that these people may have an overwhelming need for support, attention, or affection that is virtually impossible for their partners to satisfy. Dissatisfaction might be the result if their needs

continue to go unmet within the relationship. People with this negative self-schema may also become involved with partners who are cold and withholding, which are traits that may have been present in their childhood caretakers. It is probable that people who are partnered with cold and emotionally withholding people are less likely to get their needs for nurturance and empathy met, thus perpetuating their maladaptive schemas, which may be associated with the lower levels of relationship adjustment that they reported.

People who have the Abandonment/Instability negative self-schema may believe that their partners will be unreliable or unstable in providing support. Adults who have this schema may fear that they will inevitably lose someone with whom an emotional connection has taken place (Young, 1994). They typically do not feel a sense of security in their relationships, which may produce significant levels of ongoing anxiety. People with the Abandonment/Instability schema may seek constant reassurance from their partners that they will not be abandoned, or they may perpetuate the schema by choosing unreliable partners (Young & Gluhoski, 1998). People who have this negative self-schema may find it very difficult to maintain trust and stability in their relationships, which could be related to their lower level of relationship adjustment.

The forward regression analysis indicated that the Emotional Deprivation and Abandonment/Instability negative self-schemas, in that order, were the most predictive schemas of relationship adjustment from this domain. Given the significant moderate correlations between the Emotional Deprivation and the Abandonment/Instability schemas and the other schemas from this domain, there was significant shared variance among these schemas which probably affected the number of significant predictors that entered the equation. Due to the significant correlations among the other negative self-schemas from this domain and relationship adjustment, each of the negative self-schemas

should be considered important correlates of relationship adjustment.

Only one of the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, had a significant negative correlation with relationship adjustment. People with the Vulnerability to Harm and Illness negative self-schema may expect that catastrophe could strike at any time (Young, 1994). It is possible that they may take such excessive precautions to protect themselves that they have developed different belief systems regarding money and matters of recreation, and they may have different goals in mind when making major decisions than do their partners. It is conceivable that any of these major differences in life philosophies may be related to their lower levels of relationship adjustment. Vulnerability to Harm and Illness was the only negative self-schema from this domain that significantly predicted the level of relationship adjustment. This could be expected, as Vulnerability to Harm and Illness was the only negative self-schema from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain that was significantly correlated with relationship adjustment at all.

The remaining negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain (Failure, Enmeshment, and Dependence/ Incompetence) did not have significant correlations with the level of relationship adjustment as it was expected that they would. It is possible that people who have those negative self-schemas have found comfort and reassurance in their relationships that counterbalances their negative self-schemas, which could explain why they did not report lower levels of relationship adjustment.

Only one of the negative self-schemas (Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline) from the Impaired Limits domain was significantly correlated with relationship adjustment. The correlation was negative, which suggested that people who endorsed the Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline negative self-schema also reported a lower level

of overall relationship adjustment. It is possible that people who exhibit very impulsive behavior, or excessively strive to avoid pain or responsibility or conflict, do not find that they are able to adjust to intimate relationships. Relationships require discipline and reliability. People who have the Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline schema may struggle to maintain these conditions, and experience lower levels of relationship adjustment as a result.

The Entitlement negative self-schema from the Impaired Limits domain did not have a significant negative correlation with relationship adjustment. It is conceivable that people who feel that they are superior to their partners and entitled to special privileges, and who believe that they should be able to do whatever they want, regardless of the cost of others, have developed relationships in which they are in power or control (Young & Gluhoski, 1998). They may find that their belief system does not have a negative affect on their level of overall relationship adjustment because they generally get what they want in their relationships. Or, they may be so wrapped up in their own needs that they do not accurately assess the state of their relationship. Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline was the only schema from this domain that significantly predicted the level of relationship adjustment, as it was the only negative self-schema from this domain that was significantly correlated with relationship adjustment.

Subjugation was the only one of the two negative self-schemas from the Other-Directedness domain that had a significant negative correlation with the level of relationship adjustment. This suggested that people who feel subjugated in their relationships also reported lower levels of relationship adjustment. People who feel subjugated in their relationships may believe that they must surrender control to their partners or they will be retaliated against or abandoned (Young, 1994). They may also feel that their own feelings are unimportant to others, and as a result they may feel

unheard by their partners. As a result of feeling unheard and unimportant to their partners, they may not confide in their mate or exchange ideas openly, which are cornerstones of healthy relationship adjustment. Further, people who put their partners' needs and desires first may not actively engage in activities that both partners are interested in. They may never express an opinion about shared activities, such as vacations or entertainment. They may feel subsequently disappointed and angry when their partners choose something they do not really want. According to Spanier (1989), people who do not engage in shared, mutually decided upon strategies tend to report lower levels of relationship adjustment. The Subjugation negative self-schema was the only schema from this domain to significantly predict the level of relationship adjustment, as it was the only schema from this domain that was significantly correlated with relationship adjustment.

The other negative self-schema (Self-Sacrifice) from the Other-Directedness domain did not have a significant negative correlation with the level of relationship adjustment. It is possible that people who voluntarily sacrifice for their relationship on their own accord, even to the point of not getting their own needs met, may be getting something valuable in return. Perhaps they feel so positive about what they do for their partner, that they do not mind that some of their needs go unmet. In this case, they may also report higher levels of relationship adjustment because what they are doing is generally working for them.

The Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema was the only negative self-schema from the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain that was found to have a significant negative correlation with the level of relationship adjustment. People who have the Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema may believe that they must avoid the expression of all feelings in order to avoid the disapproval of their partners (Young & Gluhoski, 1998).

They may feel that they have to have rigid control over all of their feelings, including expressing affection, or they will lose control and risk judgment by others (Young, 1994). Expressing feelings and showing affection is considered a correlate of relationship adjustment (Spanier, 1989). This finding supported the conclusions of previous studies that have suggested that people who do not show affection and feel safe to express their feelings may also report lower levels of relationship adjustment (Spanier, 1989). The Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema was the only schema that predicted the level of relationship adjustment, as it is the only negative self-schema which was significantly correlated with relationship adjustment. The Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema was the only schema from this domain that significantly predicted the level of relationship adjustment, as it was the only negative self-schema that was correlated with relationship adjustment.

The Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness negative self-schema from this domain did not have a significant correlation with the level of relationship adjustment. People who have this negative self-schema strive to meet rigid standards, primarily to avoid the criticism of others. It is possible that they generally believe that their relationships meet their standards and, as such, they reported neutral levels of relationship adjustment.

The relationships of negative self-schemas and secure attachment styles

The purpose of the third research question was to explore the relationships among negative self-schemas and the four attachment styles. First, it was hypothesized that there would be significant negative correlations among each of the 15 negative self-schemas and the secure attachment style level, suggesting that people who have any of the negative self-schemas would also report lower levels of the secure attachment style. The results partially supported the hypothesis, as only nine of the 15 negative self-

schemas were found to have significant negative correlations with the secure attachment style. The remaining six negative self-schemas did not have significant correlations with the level of secure attachment.

All five of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain (Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, Emotional Deprivation, Defectiveness/Shame, and Abandonment/Instability) were negatively correlated with secure attachment. The results of this study suggested that people who had a secure attachment style did not indicate a belief that others would intentionally harm, humiliate, or take advantage of them in some way (Mistrust/Abuse). Further, they did not indicate a significant belief that they were isolated and significantly different from other people (Social Isolation/ Alienation), and they did not expect that their primary needs for emotional support, nurturance, and protection would be unmet in their relationship (Emotional Deprivation). People who had a secure attachment style also did not indicate a belief that they are so internally flawed that their partners would reject them if they allowed them to get emotionally close (Defectiveness/ Shame), and they did not believe that their partners would leave them or be unreliable in their support (Abandonment/Instability). According to Hazan and Shaver (1987), people who have a secure attachment style typically feel that they can trust others. They tend to feel comfortable with commitment and they see other people as approachable and dependable (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Each of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain entails the belief that people will not get the love and support that they need, which is markedly different from the beliefs of people with a secure attachment style. The results suggested that Mistrust/Abuse, Social Alienation/Isolation, and Emotional Deprivation, in that order, were the negative self-schemas that were the most predictive of the secure attachment style. The correlations among the negative self-schemas within the Disconnection and

Rejection domain may have affected the number of schemas that entered the equation.

Two (Vulnerability to Harm and Illness and Failure) of the four negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain had significant negative correlations with secure attachment. This suggested that people who had a secure attachment style did not report an overriding belief that physical or emotional harm could come to them at any time (Vulnerability to Harm and Illness). Ideally, parents provide nurturance, support, and a secure base from which their children can explore the world in an anxiety-free environment. This type of parenting likely promotes the development of a secure attachment style (Bowlby, 1973). People who had overly protective or highly fearful or anxious parents may have developed the same beliefs as their parents that the world is unsafe (Young, 1999). Collins and Read (1990) found that people who have a high level of the secure attachment style tended to see the world in a positive light, as a place of wonder not to be feared. Those with the Vulnerability to Harm and Illness negative self-schema do not see the world from this point of view.

The results also suggested that people who have a secure attachment style did not report a belief that they are fundamentally inadequate compared to others (Failure). People who believe that they have failed or feel that they are inferior compared to their partners may have been reared by parents who put them down and instilled in them a belief that they were not capable of performing as well as other people (Young, 1994). This is markedly different from the messages that people who develop a secure attachment style typically received. According to Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), people with a secure attachment style typically believe in their self-worth because their parents regularly validated them as children. Other studies have suggested that people with a secure attachment style have high levels of self-confidence and assertiveness (Collins & Read, 1990). It is not surprising, then, that the Vulnerability to Harm and

Illness and Failure negative self-schemas had significant negative correlations with the level of secure attachment style. The Vulnerability to Harm and Illness negative self-schema was the most significant predictor of the level of secure attachment style from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain. It is possible that Failure did not significantly enter the regression equation because of its smaller correlation with the secure attachment style.

It was surprising that neither of the other negative self-schemas (Dependence/Incompetence and Enmeshment) from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain had significant negative correlations with the level of the secure attachment style. It is possible that people who believe that cannot handle everyday responsibilities without the help of others (Dependence/Incompetence) or who believe that they can't be happy without their partner's constant support are getting their needs largely met by their relationships. For instance, people who believe that they are dependent upon or enmeshed with their partners may be generally happy because they are currently in partnered relationships. They may feel as though their steady relationship provides the support or closeness that relieves their anxiety. They may find that their partners' presence reassures them that someone will be there to support them, and they do not experience low levels of relationship adjustment.

One of the negative self-schemas (Subjugation) from the Other-Directedness domain had a negative correlation with secure attachment. It was expected that people who felt coerced to surrender control to others in order to avoid perceived retaliation or abandonment (Young, 1994), or who felt that their own feelings were unimportant to their partners, would be unlikely to report a secure attachment style. The secure attachment presumes that people feel equal to their partners and are listened to and accepted (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). People with a secure attachment style have high levels

of assertiveness (Collins & Read, 1990), which would seemingly make it less likely that they would allow themselves to be subjugated. The Self-Sacrifice schema did not have a significant negative correlation with the secure attachment style, however, both Subjugation and Self-Sacrifice together entered the regression equation to predict the level of secure attachment style. It is unknown why a schema that was not significantly correlated with the level of secure attachment entered the regression equation. Interestingly, the Self-Sacrifice negative self-schema was positively correlated with the level of secure attachment style, but not significantly. Based upon these results, it is possible that people who voluntarily give up their own needs to please others are content to do so, and report higher levels of secure attachment.

One of the negative self-schemas (Emotional Inhibition) from the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain had a significant negative correlation with the level of secure attachment, which suggested that people who feel that they must avoid the expression of emotion in order to avoid the disapproval of others (Young, 1994) did not have a strong correlation with the secure attachment style. People with the Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema may have difficulty expressing vulnerability or have difficulty communicating how they feel with their partners. They may have been reared by parents who discouraged the expression of feelings and taught their children to suppress their feelings. This is very different from the openness to sharing feelings that people who have a secure attachment style typically report. People who have a secure attachment style generally feel that they are open and safe to communicate with their partners without retaliation (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), as they were reared by parents who encouraged the them to share their feelings in a secure and accepting environment.

The Unrelenting Standards negative self-schema did not have a significant correlation with secure attachment. This was surprising, as it was anticipated that people

who are hypercritical toward themselves and others (often holding a negative view of themselves and others), and who base their sense of self-worth on what they accomplish, would be negatively correlated with the secure attachment style. It is not surprising that the Emotional Inhibition negative self-schema was the most significant predictor of the level of secure attachment, as it was the only schema from this domain that had a significant correlation with secure attachment.

Interestingly, neither of the negative self-schemas (Entitlement and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline) Impaired Limits domain had significant correlations with the level of secure attachment. As a result, neither of these self-schemas was significantly predictive of secure attachment style.

The relationships of negative self-schemas and fearful attachment styles

Next, it was hypothesized that the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection, Overvigilance and Inhibition, and the Other-Directedness domains would be significantly and positively correlated with fearful attachment style levels. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from those domains would be the most predictive of the fearful attachment style. The results indicated that each of the negative self-schemas (Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, and Defectiveness/Shame) from the Disconnection and Rejection domain had a significant positive correlation with the fearful attachment style. This finding suggested that people who had any of these negative self-schemas also reported having higher levels of fearful attachment. People who developed any of these negative self-schemas may have had parents who were cold, rejecting, or abusive (Young, 1994). Their parents may not have provided the basic support and assurance they required to grow into secure, healthy individuals. Instead, they may have learned to fear their interactions with important figures in their life, developed low levels of self-confidence,

and may have learned to doubt other people's motives, all of which are common among people who endorse have a high level of the fearful attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). For instance, people who had the Abandonment/Instability negative self-schema may have a fear that others are unreliable for support and connection because their own parents were inconsistently there for them. They may believe that they will lose someone with whom an emotional connection might take place, and they actively avoid the the potential loss of that emotional connection. People who have the Mistrust/Abuse negative self-schema may have an expectation that others will intentionally harm them, which could lead to fear the fear of getting close to someone. A person who has the Emotional Deprivation negative self-schema may believe that others will not be there consistently to provide the nurturance, empathy, and protection that they need. People who have the Social Isolation/ Alienation negative self-schema may believe that they are fundamentally different from and isolated from their partners. They may believe that their partners will never be able to fully understand who they are, and so they fear getting close to others. People who have the Defectiveness/Shame negative self-schema believe that they are internally flawed, and if their partners get too close, they may see the flaw and withdraw from the relationship. Their parents were potentially very critical and may have made them feel as though they were not worthy of love. Each of these descriptors mirrors Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) supposition that people who have a fearful attachment style have developed a negative view of themselves and others after having been reared by abusive, rejecting, or neglectful parents. Emotional Deprivation and Social Isolation/Alienation were found to be the two most important predictors of the fearful attachment style. It is possible that the significant correlations between the negative self-schemas within the Disconnection and Rejection domain accounted for much of the variance and limited the number of negative self-schemas that

entered the equation.

The negative self-schemas from the Other-Directedness (Subjugation and Self-Sacrifice) domain were expected to have significant positive correlations with the level of the fearful attachment style. The results indicated that Subjugation was the only negative self-schema from this domain that had a significant positive correlation with the level of fearful attachment, suggesting that people who feel subjugated in their relationships reported higher levels of fearful attachment. People who feel subjugated in their relationships may believe that they must surrender control to their partner because their partners will retaliate or abandon them if they do not. These people were probably reared by parents who were overly dominant and who valued their own needs more than those of their children (Young, 1994). It was expected that people who felt that they must surrender control to their partners would have a negative view of themselves and their partners. They may have low levels of assertiveness, hold a negative view of themselves and others, and find it difficult to respect themselves for allowing someone to control them in this way, all of which are common among people with a fearful attachment style (Bartholomew, 1990) .

The other negative self-schema from this domain, Self-Sacrifice, did not have a significant positive correlation with fearful attachment. It is possible that the people who voluntarily give up their needs to please their partners are generally in agreement with that arrangement. They may be very dedicated to the relationship, and feel good about giving to their partners. Interestingly, both negative self-schemas from this domain were significantly predictive of the level of fearful attachment, although Subjugation was the only negative self-schema that was significantly correlated with fearful attachment. It is unknown why the Self-Sacrifice negative self-schema entered the equation.

The final domain that was expected to have negative self-schemas (Emotional

Inhibition and Unrelenting Standards) that would be positively correlated with the level of fearful attachment was the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain. Emotional Inhibition was the only one of these two schemas that had a significant positive correlation with the level of fearful attachment, indicating that people who reported a belief that they must avoid the expression of emotions to avoid the disapproval of their partners also reported higher levels of fearful attachment. According to Young (1994), people who have this negative self-schema may have had parents who discouraged the expression of their natural emotions. People who feel emotionally inhibited may feel that they will meet with rejection from others if they openly express their positive or negative feelings. This is also common with people who have a fearful attachment style, whose parents may have rejected their feelings. People with a fearful attachment style may be uncomfortable with emotional closeness and fear rejection if they show their partners how they feel (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), and they tend to show fewer emotions than people with a secure attachment style (Simpson, 1990). Emotional Inhibition was the only negative self-schema from this domain that significantly predicted the level of the fearful attachment style, as the Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness negative self-schema was not significantly correlated with the level of fearful attachment.

The Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness schema from the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain was not significantly correlated with the level of fearful attachment. It is possible that the people who endorsed this self-schema may not have met their own personal standards and find it difficult to slow down, but did not generalize these standards to their interpersonal relationships. Or, their relationships may be in a place in which their standards are generally met.

While not hypothesized, there were three other negative self-schemas from other domains that also had significant positive correlations with fearful attachment. They were

Failure and Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain, and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline, a schema from the Impaired Limits domain. These results suggested that people who reported high levels of the Failure negative self-schemas also reported higher levels of fearful attachment. These people may believe that they have failed or will inevitably fail, or feel that they are inadequate to others. They may have had parents who put them down or rejected them in some way. They may have developed the belief that they are flawed and that their partners will find that flaw and exploit it, which is also a common fear among people who have a fearful attachment style (Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992). People who reported a high level of the Vulnerability to Harm and Illness negative self-schema also reported higher levels of fearful attachment. The people who have this negative self-schema may feel that the world and the people in it are unpredictable and that there is little they can do to protect themselves. These are also common fears of people who have of a fearful attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Finally, people who reported a high level of the Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline schema also reported higher levels of fearful attachment. These people may excessively strive to avoid pain, responsibility, and conflict because they fear what those conditions may bring (Young, 1994). Failure and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline negative self-schemas that were the most significant predictors of fearful attachment from those two domains.

The relationships of negative self-schemas and preoccupied attachment styles

It was hypothesized that each of the negative self-schemas (Failure, Dependence/Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, and Enmeshment) from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain would have a significant positive correlation with the level of preoccupied attachment style. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from that domain would be most predictive of the preoccupied

attachment style. This hypothesis was largely unsupported by the results of the study, as only one of the four negative self-schemas (Enmeshment) had a significant positive correlation with preoccupied attachment. The people who reported that they have an excessive emotional closeness with their partner, and indicated that they cannot survive or be happy without their partners, reported higher levels of preoccupied attachment. They may have come from families that were very overprotective. Their parents may not have insisted upon a healthy level of individuation. They may have encouraged their children to let others to take care of them, as opposed to teaching them that they were capable of taking care of themselves (Young, 1994). People with a preoccupied attachment style usually have an intense desire to stay close to their partners to insure continual attachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They may have a deflated sense of self-worth, a high level of self-doubt, and they may place other people in an exalted position (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). According to Kobak and Sceery (1988), people with a preoccupied attachment style may emotionally cling to their partners to relieve their anxiety about being abandoned or being unable to take care of themselves. Each of these attachment behaviors is similar to the behavior of people who have the Enmeshment negative self-schema, so it was expected that these two variables would have a significant positive relationship. Enmeshment was the only negative self-schema from this domain that was significantly predictive of the level of preoccupied attachment style, as it was the only negative self-schema that was significantly correlated with preoccupied attachment.

It was surprising that the other negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain did not have significant positive correlations with the levels of preoccupied attachment, as it was hypothesized they would be. Failure, Dependence/Incompetence, and Vulnerability to Harm and Illness were expected to have positive correlations with Preoccupied attachment because each of those schemas reflects

a belief that the people who have them cannot function on their own (Dependence/Incompetence), that the environment is unsafe (Vulnerability to Harm or Illness), or that they are desperate for others to validate their performance (Failure). Each of those schemas indicates a high level of anxiety, and a belief that others may be able to protect or validate them, which is often associated with the preoccupied attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

Although not hypothesized, there were two additional negative self-schemas from two separate domains that also had significant positive correlations with the level of preoccupied attachment. These negative self-schemas were Abandonment, from the Disconnection and Rejection domain, and Subjugation, from the Other-Directedness domain. The findings suggested that people who had either of these negative self-schemas also endorsed higher levels of preoccupied attachment. People who have the Abandonment/Instability negative self-schema fear that others may leave them or that they will not be there to provide support. These people may feel a sense of desperation to maintain the interest of their partners, indicative of a preoccupied attachment style. It is also possible that people who feel subjugated in their relationships may feel that they must constantly give their partners control, or else face retaliation or abandonment. This excessive desire to please their partners may be reflective of a preoccupied attachment style.

The relationships of negative self-schemas and dismissing attachment styles

It was hypothesized that the negative self-schema scores from the Impaired Limits domain would be significantly and positively related to the dismissing attachment style levels. It was unknown which of the negative self-schemas from that domain would be the most predictive of the dismissing attachment style. The hypothesis was not supported by the findings. Neither of the negative self-schemas (Entitlement and

Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline) from the Impaired Limits domain had a significant positive correlation with dismissing attachment. However, five negative self-schemas from other domains did have significant positive correlations with the level of dismissing attachment. Three of the negative self-schemas (Emotional Deprivation, Mistrust/Abuse, and Social Isolation/Alienation) that were positively correlated with dismissing attachment were from the Disconnection and Rejection domain. These findings suggested that people who had high levels of these negative self-schemas also reported higher levels of dismissing attachment. It is possible that some people who have a belief that they will never get the nurturance, empathy, and protection that they need from others (Emotional Deprivation), believe that others will harm them intentionally (Mistrust/Abuse), or believe that they are fundamentally different from other people (Social Isolation/Alienation) may psychologically defend themselves from getting hurt in relationships by devaluing the need for those relationships in favor of their own rigid self-reliance. Rigid self-reliance and devaluation of relationships are common behaviors of people with a dismissing attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), which might explain the significant relationships of the Emotional Deprivation, Mistrust/Abuse, and Social Isolation/Alienation negative self-schemas and the level of dismissing attachment.

Two other negative self-schemas were found to have significant negative correlations with the level of dismissing attachment. These negative self-schemas were Failure, from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain, and Emotional Inhibition, from the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain. People who reported high levels of the Failure or the Emotional Inhibition negative self-schemas also reported higher levels of preoccupied attachment. It is possible that people who believe that they are fundamentally inadequate relative to their partners (Failure) or who feel that they must

avoid expression of their feelings and inhibit their impulses and avoid expressing vulnerability (Emotional Inhibition) may have developed a defensive denial of the value of relationships to protect them from engaging in relationships in which they would be could be hurt. They dismiss relationships rather than allot them any value.

Summation

Due to the large number of relationships studied among the variables in this study, it may be possible to lose sight of the “big picture,” as the results are quite complicated. The purpose of this segment is to succinctly summarize the findings without being saturated by the more detailed tentative conclusions or explanations that were presented earlier.

The results of the first research question suggested that people who reported a high level of the secure attachment style also reported a higher level of relationship adjustment. People who indicated high levels of the fearful and dismissing attachment styles (avoidant attachment styles) reported a lower level of relationship adjustment. The preoccupied attachment style was not significantly correlated with relationship adjustment. The secure attachment style was the most significant predictor of the level of relationship adjustment. These results were generally supportive of the hypothesis, with the exception that preoccupied attachment was expected to be negatively correlated with relationship adjustment. These results mirrored the findings of previous studies that were conducted primarily with student participants.

The results of the second research question indicated that nine of the 15 negative self-schemas had significant negative correlations with relationship adjustment. It was hypothesized that all of the negative self-schemas would have significant negative correlations with relationship adjustment, so the hypothesis was only partially supported by the results. The nine negative self-schemas that were correlated with

relationship adjustment were representative of all of the domains. Each of the domains contained at least one schema that was significantly and negatively correlated with relationship adjustment, and all five of the schemas within the Disconnection and Rejection domain had a significant negative correlation with relationship adjustment. The five negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain had some of the strongest negative correlations with relationship adjustment. This suggested that the thematic belief that other people will not be available and reliable for support is very significantly related to lower levels of relationship adjustment. The nine negative self-schemas that were correlated with the level of relationship adjustment were Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/ Alienation, Defectiveness/Shame, Failure, Enmeshment, Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline, Subjugation, and Emotional Inhibition. The most important negative self-schema predictors of relationship adjustment were Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline, Subjugation, and Emotional Inhibition.

The results of the third research question were the most complicated to decipher. It was hypothesized that all of the negative self-schemas, regardless of the domain they represented, would have significant negative correlations with the secure attachment style. This hypothesis was only partially supported by the results. Nine of the 15 negative self-schemas had significant negative correlations with the secure attachment style. They were Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/ Alienation, Defectiveness/Shame, Failure, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, Subjugation, and Emotional Inhibition. Each of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain had significant negative correlations with the secure attachment style. Once again, this suggested that the schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain

may represent conditions that must be met for secure, well-adjusted relationships to form. The Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, Emotional Deprivation, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, Subjugation, Self-Sacrifice, and Emotional Inhibition negative self-schemas were the most significant predictors of (though negatively correlated with) the secure attachment style, in their respective domains.

Next, it was hypothesized that the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection, Overvigilance and Inhibition, and Other-Directedness domains would have significant positive correlations with the fearful attachment style. The results only partially confirmed the hypothesis. Each of the negative self-schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain were correlated with the fearful attachment style, but only one of the negative self-schemas the Overvigilance and Inhibition and one of the negative self-schemas from the Other-Directedness domain were found to have significant positive correlations with the fearful attachment style. Further, additional negative self-schemas from other domains were significantly correlated with the fearful attachment style. The negative self-schemas that were positively correlated with the fearful attachment style were Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, Defectiveness/Shame, Failure, Vulnerability to Harm and Illness, Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline, Subjugation, and Emotional Inhibition. Each of the five schemas from the Disconnection and Rejection domain were significantly correlated with the fearful attachment and had some of the strongest correlations with fearful attachment. This finding suggested that the schemas within the Disconnection and Rejection domain are particularly identified by people who also report high levels of fearful attachment. Each of the other domains had at least one negative self-schema that had a significant positive correlation with fearful attachment. The Emotional Deprivation, Social Isolation/Alienation, Failure, Insufficient Self-Control, Subjugation, Self-Sacrifice,

and Emotional Inhibition schemas were the most significant predictors of fearful attachment, in their respective domains.

It was hypothesized that the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain alone would be significantly and positively correlated with the preoccupied attachment style. The results were largely unresponsive to the hypothesis, as Enmeshment was the only negative self-schema from this domain that had a significant positive relationship with the preoccupied attachment style. Additionally, other negative self-schemas from other domains were also found to have significant positive correlations with the preoccupied attachment style. They were Abandonment/Instability and Subjugation. The Abandonment/Instability, Defectiveness/Shame, Enmeshment, and Subjugation negative self-schemas were found to be the most significant predictors of preoccupied attachment, in their respective domains.

Finally, it was hypothesized that the negative self-schemas from the Impaired Limits domain would be significantly and positively related to the dismissing attachment style. The results were completely unresponsive to the hypothesis. However, five negative self-schemas did have a significant positive correlation with dismissing attachment. They were Emotional Deprivation, Mistrust/Abuse, Social Isolation/Alienation, Failure, and Emotional Inhibition. Interestingly, each of the negative self-schemas that were significantly correlated with the dismissing attachment style were also significantly correlated with the fearful attachment style. This may suggest that people with these negative self-schemas have different reactions to their fear of close relationships, or it may be an artifact of strong correlations between those specific schemas. Future research could explore this finding further.

Implications of the study

The findings of this study corroborated, with an older, non-student population,

the results of previous studies that consisted of younger participants that suggested that the people who have a secure attachment style report higher levels of relationship adjustment than people with fearful, preoccupied, or dismissing attachment styles. This result suggests that mental health practitioners who endeavor to help their clients develop and sustain healthier relationships may wish to assess their clients' attachment styles and help them overcome obstacles that prohibit secure attachments. One way to do that might be to determine which negative self-schemas are related to the insecure attachment style they most strongly fit. The results of this study, it is hoped, may help them to pinpoint specific negative self-schemas that may be maladaptive to the formation of healthy relationships. It is conceivable that by exploring the origins of insecure attachments and challenging the perpetuating belief systems that sustain insecure attachment behavior, clients may be able to overcome their negative belief systems and develop more secure attachments in their lives.

In addition, attachment theory seems particularly relevant to counselors' work because of the central position that interpersonal relating occupies in counseling. For example, some therapists believe that the counseling relationship may provide for the client and therapist a significant attachment relationship. Clients usually enter counseling when they are feeling vulnerable and distressed. Their attachment behavioral system may be engaged from the onset as clients seek proximity to, and care from, someone they perceive as stable and wise. Therapists have the opportunity to provide a congruent, safe attachment bond that their clients may never have experienced. A skilled therapist can use this bond to aid the client in making the changes they need to live and overcome pervasive negative self-schemas and develop a more secure level of attachment.

Limitations of this study

There were several limitations to study. The number of participants (n = 137)

who participated in the study was lower than the ideal number of participants, which reduced the statistical power of the results. Bonferoni corrections were used to adjust the alpha level in an effort to diminish the alpha inflation. However, due to the large number of variables and correlational analyses, a much larger number of participants would be preferable for a study such as this.

The participants who completed this study were a largely homogeneous group, which limits the ability to generalize these findings to a larger, diverse population. The sample was predominantly Caucasian, well-educated, heterosexual, and wealthy. They may have reported higher levels of relationship adjustment because their basic needs are generally met. Though it was beyond the scope of this study, gender effects, socioeconomic status effects, age effects, length of relationship effects, and the effects of children in the home could add significant information to enhance these results.

Relationship adjustment and attachment styles, the criterion variables in this study, are certainly influenced by other predictor variables than negative self-schemas and attachment styles. The results suggested that large percentages of the variance of the criterion variables were left unaccounted for. Studying constructs as large and *complex* as the levels of relationship adjustment or attachment styles seems to scratch the surface of understanding what contributes to these variables.

Another limitation of the study was that the instruments took a considerable amount of time to complete. This may have resulted in participants becoming tired or frustrated while completing the measures. The measures were counterbalanced to help prepare for this possibility.

Finally, while the Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) four category measure is one of the most widely used and empirically validated assessments of adult attachment, it is a simple, four-item measure. Other attachment style measures exist that contain

multiple items and robustly measure attachment, though they are either categorical in nature or do not measure attachment along the dimensions of self versus other.

Implications for future research

Negative self-schemas and attachment styles seem to have meaningful relationships that have only been explored by this study. In the near future, a similar study with more participants could greatly improve the statistical power of the findings. Additionally, the effects of gender, age, socio-economic status, length of the relationship, and the presence of children in the home could be looked at as covariates to glean richer information in those areas than this study was able to provide.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Tables

Table 1

Correlation Matrix of Attachment Styles and Total Adjustment Score

	<u>Attachment Styles</u>			
<u>DAS</u>	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing
Total Adjustment	.36**	-.30**	.07	-.20*

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

Table 2

Correlation Matrix of Negative Self-Schemas and Dyadic Adjustment Total Score

<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	<u>Dyadic Adjustment Scale Subscales</u>
	Total Adjustment Score
<u>Disconnection and Rejection Domain</u>	
Emotional Deprivation	-.49**
Abandonment/Instability	-.46**
Mistrust/Abuse	-.46**
Social Isolation/Alienation	-.38**
Defectiveness/Shame	-.23*
<u>Impaired Autonomy and Performance Domain</u>	
Vulnerability to Harm and Illness	-.34**
Failure	-.19
Enmeshment	-.09
Dependence/Incompetence	-.02
<u>Impaired Limits Domain</u>	
Insufficient Self-Control/Discipline	-.31**
Entitlement	-.13

*p < .01

**p < .001

Table 2 (continued)

Correlation Matrix of Negative Self-Schemas and Dyadic Adjustment Total Score

<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	<u>Dyadic Adjustment Scale Subscales</u>
	Total Adjustment Score
<u>Other-Directedness Domain</u>	
Subjugation	-.33**
Self-Sacrifice	-.10
<u>Overvigilance and Inhibition Domain</u>	
Emotional Inhibition	-.36**
Unrelenting Standards	-.21

*p < .01 **p < .001

Table 3

Correlation Matrix of Negative Self-Schemas and Partner Attachment Styles

<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	<u>Attachment Styles</u>			
	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing
<u>Disconnection and Rejection Domain</u>				
Emotional Deprivation	-.43**	.43**	-.02	.31**
Abandonment	-.25*	.25*	.29*	-.06
Mistrust/Abuse	-.45**	.40**	.00	.28*
Social Isolation/Alienation	-.44**	.40**	.01	.24*
Defectiveness/Shame	-.40**	.36**	-.08	.12
<u>Impaired Autonomy and Performance Domain</u>				
Failure	-.27*	.33**	.05	.23*
Dependence/Incompetence	-.13	.19	.18	.04
Vulnerability to Harm/Ill	-.28*	.23*	.03	.10
Enmeshment	.01	.11	.24*	-.01
<u>Impaired Limits Domain</u>				
Entitlement	-.15	.17	-.04	.19
Insufficient Self-Control/ Self-Discipline	-.16	.22*	.19	.08

*p < .01

**p < .001

Table 3 (Continued)

Correlation Matrix of Negative Self-Schemas and Partner Attachment Styles

<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	<u>Attachment Styles</u>			
	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing
<u>Other-Directedness Domain</u>				
Subjugation	-.25*	.36**	.23*	.10
Self-Sacrifice	.10	-.05	.09	-.18
<u>Overvigilance and Inhibition Domain</u>				
Emotional Inhibition	-.59**	.53**	-.14	.30**
Unrelenting Standards	-.15	.09	.06	.12

*p < .01

**p < .001

Table 4

Correlation Matrices of Negative Self-Schemas by Domain

<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>				
	ED	AB	MA	SI	DS
<u>Disconnection and Rejection Domain</u>					
Emotional Deprivation (ED)	X	.40**	.58**	.42**	.36**
Abandonment/Instability (AB)	.40**	X	.50**	.48**	.47**
Mistrust/Abuse (MA)	.58**	.50**	X	.59**	.51**
Social Isolation/Alienation (SI)	.42**	.48**	.59**	X	.56**
Defectiveness/Shame (DS)	.36**	.47**	.51**	.56**	X
<u>Impaired Autonomy and Performance Domain</u>					
	VH	FA	EM	DI	
Vulnerability to Harm and Illness (VH)	X	.50**	.38**	.40**	
Failure(FA)	.50**	X	.26*	.43**	
Enmeshment (EM)	.38**	.26*	X	.26*	
Dependence/Incompetence (DI)	.40**	.43**	.26*	X	
<u>Impaired Limits</u>	IS	ET			
Insufficient Self-Control/Discipline (IS)	X	.17			
Entitlement (ET)	.17	X			

*p < .01

**p < .001

Table 4 (continued)

Correlation Matrices of Negative Self-Schemas by Domain

<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	<u>Negative Self-Schemas</u>	
	SB	SS
<u>Other Directedness Domain</u>		
Subjugation (SB)	X	.32**
Self-Sacrifice (SS)	.32**	X
<u>Overvigilance and Inhibition</u>	EI	US
Emotional Inhibition (EI)	X	.22*
Unrelenting Standards (US)	.22*	X

*p < .01

**p < .001

Table 5

Forward Regression of Partner Attachment Styles and Total Adjustment Score

Predictors	R	Rsq	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Secure Attachment	.36	.13	20.43***	.13	20.43***	.36**

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 6

Forward Regression of Disconnection and Rejection Negative Self-Schema Domain and Total Adjustment Score

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Deprivation	.49	.24	41.59**	.24	41.59**	-.49**
Abandonment	.57	.32	31.72**	.09	16.94**	-.46**

*p < .01

**p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 7

Forward Regression of Impaired Autonomy and Performance Negative Self-Schema
Domain and Total Adjustment Score

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Vulnerability to Harm and Illness	.34	.11	17.41**	.11	17.41**	-.34**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 8

Forward Regression of Impaired Limits Negative Self-Schema Domain and Total Adjustment

Predictors	R	Rsqr	F(eqn)	Rsqrch	F(ch)	r
Insufficient Self-Control/Discipline	.31	.10	14.39**	.10	14.39**	-.31**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 9

Forward Regression of Other-Directedness Negative Self-Schema Domain and Total Adjustment Score

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Subjugation	.33	.11	16.82**	.11	16.82**	-.33**

*p < .01

**p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 10

Forward Regression of Overvigilance and Inhibition Negative Self-Schema Domain and Total Adjustment Score

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsquch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Inhibition	.36	.13	19.78**	.13	19.78**	-.36**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 11

Forward Regression of Disconnection and Rejection Negative Self-Schema Domain and Secure Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsq	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Mistrust/Abuse	.45	.20	33.89**	.20	33.89**	-.45**
Social Isolation/ Alienation	.50	.25	21.93*	.05	8.17*	-.44**
Emotional Deprivation	.53	.28	17.32*	.03	6.36*	-.43**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 12

Forward Regression of Impaired Autonomy and Performance Negative Self-Schema
Domain and Secure Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsquch	F(ch)	r
Vulnerability to Harm and Illness	.28	.08	11.52*	.08	11.52*	-.28*

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 13

Forward Regression of Other-Directedness Negative Self- Schema Domain and Secure Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsquch	F(ch)	r
Subjugation	.25	.06	8.62*	.06	8.62*	-.25*
Self-Sacrifice	.31	.10	7.14*	.04	5.37	.10

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 14

Forward Regression of Overvigilance and Inhibition Negative Self-Schema Domain and Secure Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Inhibition	.59	.34	70.23**	.34	70.23**	-.59**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 15

Forward Regression of Disconnection and Rejection Negative Self-Schema Domain and Fearful Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Deprivation	.43	.18	29.82**	.18	29.82**	.43**
Social Isolation/ Alienation	.49	.24	21.45**	.06	10.89*	.40**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 16

Forward Regression of Impaired Autonomy and Performance Negative Self-Schema
Domain and Fearful Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Failure	.33	.11	16.55**	.11	16.55**	.33**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 17

Forward Regression of Impaired Limits Negative Self-Schema Domain and Fearful Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqr	F(eqn)	Rsqrch	F(ch)	r
Insufficient Self-Control	.22	.05	7.15*	.05	7.15*	.22*

*p < .01

**p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 18

Forward Regression of Other-Directedness Negative Self-Schema Domain and Fearful Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsquch	F(ch)	r
Subjugation	.36	.13	19.74**	.13	19.74**	.36**
Self-Sacrifice	.40	.16	12.59**	.03	4.88	-.05

*p < .01

**p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 19

Forward Regression of Overvigilance and Inhibition Negative Self-Schema Domain and Fearful Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Inhibition	.53	.28	51.48**	.28	51.48**	.53**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 20

Forward Regression of Disconnection and Rejection Negative Self-Schema Domain and Preoccupied Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsquch	F(ch)	r
Abandonment	.29	.08	12.29*	.08	12.29*	.29*
Defectiveness/Shame	.38	.14	11.25**	.06	9.44*	-.08

*p < .01

**p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 21

Forward Regression of Impaired Autonomy and Performance Negative Self-Schema
Domain and Preoccupied Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Enmeshment	.24	.06	8.50**	.06	8.50**	.24**

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 22

Forward Regression of Other-Directedness Negative Self-Schema Domain and
Preoccupied Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsq	F(eqn)	Rsqch	F(ch)	r
Subjugation	.23	.05	7.30*	.05	7.30*	.23*

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 23

Forward Regression of Disconnection and Rejection Negative Self-Schema Domain and Dismissing Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqr	F(eqn)	Rsqrch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Deprivation	.31	.10	14.74**	.10	14.74**	.31**
Abandonment	.37	.14	10.65**	.04	6.02	-.06
Social Isolation/ Alienation	.43	.18	9.85**	.05	7.25*	.24*

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 24

Forward Regression of Impaired Autonomy and Performance Negative Self-Schema
Domain and Dismissing Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqu	F(eqn)	Rsquch	F(ch)	r
Failure	.23	.06	7.82*	.06	7.82*	.23*

*p < .01 **p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

Table 25

Forward Regression of Overvigilance and Inhibition Negative Self-Schema Domain and Dismissing Attachment Style

Predictors	R	Rsqr	F(eqn)	Rsqrch	F(ch)	r
Emotional Inhibition	.30	.09	13.0**.09		12.97**	.30**

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

r = Correlation of predictor variables with the criterion variable

APPENDIX B: Demographics Sheet

Demographic Information

Directions: Please answer each question by filling in the blank, checking the blank, or circling the number that best describes you.

- 1) How old are you? Age _____
- 2) Gender: ____ 1) Female ____ 2) Male
- 3) Race: (check all that apply)
- | | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ 1) African American/Black | _____ 4) Caucasian/White |
| _____ 2) American Indian/Native American | _____ 5) Hispanic/Latino/Latina |
| _____ 3) Asian/Asian American | _____ 6) Other: _____ |
- 4) Are you:
- | | |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ 1) Single | _____ 5) Separated |
| _____ 2) Partnered (living with partner) | _____ 6) Divorced |
| _____ 3) Partnered (not living together) | _____ 7) Widowed |
| _____ 4) Married | |
- 5) Sexual orientation ____ 1) bisexual ____ 2) gay/lesbian ____ 3) heterosexual
- 6) How long have you and your partner or spouse been together?
_____ years _____ months
- 7) How satisfied are you with this relationship?
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------|
| _____ 1 | _____ 2 | _____ 3 | _____ 4 | _____ 5 | _____ 6 | _____ 7 |
| very dissatisfied | | | | | | very satisfied |
- 8) If you have children, how many children are currently living in the home?

- 9) Highest level of education:
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ 1) elementary school | _____ 6) some college |
| _____ 2) junior high school | _____ 7) undergraduate degree |
| _____ 3) some high school | _____ 8) some graduate training |
| _____ 4) high school diploma or GED | _____ 9) graduate degree |
| _____ 5) voc-tech training | |
- 10) If you have attended college, how many years of college have you completed?
_____ years _____ months
- 11) What is your approximate annual family income?
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ 1) Less than \$10,000/year | _____ 7) \$40,000-50,000/year |
| _____ 2) \$10,000-15,000/year | _____ 8) \$50,000-60,000/year |
| _____ 3) \$15,000-20,000/year | _____ 9) \$60,000-70,000/year |
| _____ 4) \$20,000-25,000/year | _____ 10) \$70,000-80,000/year |
| _____ 5) \$25,000-30,000/year | _____ 11) \$80,000-90,000/year |
| _____ 6) \$30,000-\$40,000/year | _____ 12) \$90,000 or more/year |
- 12) How close do you feel to your mother?
- | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| _____ 1 | _____ 2 | _____ 3 | _____ 4 | _____ 5 | _____ 6 | _____ 7 |
| not very close | | | | | | very close |
- 13) How close do you feel to your father?
- | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| _____ 1 | _____ 2 | _____ 3 | _____ 4 | _____ 5 | _____ 6 | _____ 7 |
| not very close | | | | | | very close |
- 14) Did your parents remain married or did they divorce?
____ 1) Married ____ 2) Divorced

APPENDIX C: Informed Consent Form

Please Read and Keep This Form for Your Records

You are invited to participate in a study exploring relationship satisfaction of individuals in partnered couples. **Participation in this study involves the completion of four questionnaires and a brief demographics sheet which should take no longer than 25 to 30 minutes.** It is the common belief of psychologists and other mental health researchers that if we can determine which factors contribute to healthier, more fulfilling relationships *and* which factors contribute to dysfunctional and less satisfying relationships, practitioners in the helping professions will be more successful in assisting their clients in developing the kinds of relationships they seek. The following questionnaires will ask you about your current level of relationship satisfaction, various thoughts that you may or may not have about yourself in relation to other people, and the level of closeness you feel with people in your life.

Possible benefits of participating in this study include increasing the understanding of how satisfied you are in your current partnered relationship. There are no foreseeable risks of participating in this study. However, most of the questions do ask you about your relationship. This may be viewed by some participants as being sensitive in nature. Should you have any concerns after completing this packet that you would like to discuss with a counseling professional, a Resource List has been included for you.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, please complete the four questionnaires and return them to me in the Business Reply envelope which has been provided for you. It is my hope to have the majority of the data collected by **July 23, 2001**, though completed questionnaires will be accepted after that date if you require more time. There is no penalty for not participating and you have the right to withdraw your consent and participation in this study at any time without penalty.

All information collected in this study is strictly confidential. No individuals will be identified. Surveys will be tracked by numbers only and no identifying information will be collected. Your name will not be requested anywhere within this packet. By mailing this packet, you are giving your consent to participate in this study.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions concerning this study, please feel free to contact David Campbell, M.Ed. at (405) 744-6040 or Carrie Winterowd, Ph.D., 434 Willard Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-6040. You may also contact Sharon Bacher, Institutional Review Board Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-5700.

APPENDIX D: Letter of Invitation (Substitutes for Script)

Dear Potential Research Participant,

Hello! My name is David Campbell. I would like to invite you to participate in a study exploring relationship satisfaction in partnered couples. Participation in this research involves the completion of four questionnaires and a brief demographics sheet which should take no longer than 25 to 30 minutes of your time.

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Counseling Psychology Program at Oklahoma State University. The data collected from this study will be the foundation of my dissertation. You should know, though, that this study means much more to me than the final step in my journey toward this degree. It is the first step of what I hope will be a *lifetime* of learning about relationships. I am passionate about developing a deeper understanding of this very important issue in all of our lives, and it is my hope that after reading this letter, you will be, too.

As a student of Counseling Psychology, I work with people on a daily basis who are seeking deeper meaning and increased satisfaction in their intimate relationships. It is the common belief of psychologists and other mental health researchers that if we can determine which factors contribute to healthier, more fulfilling relationships *and* which factors contribute to dysfunctional and less satisfying relationships, practitioners in the helping professions will be more successful in assisting their clients in developing the kinds of relationships they seek. I believe that this study will add a new dimension to this body of information, and *you* can help.

Your candid responses on each of the following anonymous questionnaires will provide a wealth of information to add to this study. It is not necessary for your partner to fill out a packet, though I would be happy to provide one should he/she wish to do so. I realize that the packet is comprised of several pages and seems as though it will take a long time to fill out, but you might be surprised at how fast it goes. If you are interested and are willing to participate in this research, you may fill out these questionnaires in your own home and return the packet anonymously to me in the provided Business Reply envelope. It is my hope to have the majority of the completed questionnaires returned to me by July 23, 2001 so that I may begin my data analysis. I will, of course, accept them after that date if you need more time. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time,

David B. Campbell, M.Ed.
Primary Investigator
Counseling Psychology Doctoral Candidate
Oklahoma State University
(405) 744-6040

Carrie L. Winterowd, Ph.D.
Dissertation Director
Associate Professor
Oklahoma State University
(405) 744-6040

APPENDIX E: Institutional Review Board Approval

**Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board**

Protocol Expires: 7/10/02

Date: Wednesday, July 11, 2001

IRB Application No. ED01134

Proposal Title: THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG NEGATIVE SELF-SCHEMAS, PARTNER ATTACHMENT
STYLES, AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Principal
Investigator(s):

David Brandon Campbell
434 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Carrie Winterowd
434 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

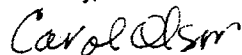
Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

David Brandon Campbell 2

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG NEGATIVE SELF-SCHEMAS,
PARTNER ATTACHMENT STYLES, AND RELATIONSHIP
ADJUSTMENT

Major Field: Educational Psychology (Specialty: Counseling Psychology)

Education: Earned Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, with double
major in French Language and Literature, from Oklahoma
State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May 1995.

Earned Master of Education degree in Community
Counseling from The University of Georgia, Athens,
Georgia in March 1998.

Completed the Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree at
Oklahoma State University in December 2002

Experience: Practicum Counselor, Juvenile Counseling and Assessment
Program, 1996-1998
Practicum Counselor, Payne County Youth Services, 1998-1999
Practicum Counselor, OSU University Counseling, 1999-2000
Intake Counselor, OSU University Counseling, 1999-2001
Teaching Assistant, Masters Level Courses, 1999-2001
Primary Supervisor, Masters Students Practicum, 1999-2001
Pre-Doctoral Psychology Intern, Counseling and Testing
Center, The University of Georgia, 2001-2002

Membership: American Psychological Association
Georgia Psychological Association
Southeastern Psychological Association